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TOMB OF HORRORS

An Adventure for Four to Six
9th-Level Characters

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INTRODUCTION

In the far reaches of the world, under a lost and lonely hill, lies the sinister Tomb of Horrors. Terrible traps, strange and ferocious monsters, rich and magical treasures, and an evil demilich fill this labyrinthine crypt.

The original version of this module was first used for the official ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® tournament at Origins I in 1974. Next it was published as Dungeon Module S1 in 1981 using the 1st edition rules. The module was later expanded in *Return to the Tomb of Horrors* in 1998 using the 2nd edition rules. However, the original tomb was never actually updated—it was reprinted as it originally saw print. Now, twenty-one years after its first appearance, the original module is finally being updated to the latest incarnation of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® rules (3.5).

PREPARATION

This update requires the use of the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*. This update also utilizes information found in *Libris Mortis: Book of Undead*. If the Dungeon Master does not have a copy of *Libris Mortis*, the adventure may still be run by omitting items and creatures drawn from that resource.

This update of the *Tomb of Horrors* is written for four to six adventurers of around 9th level. Careful readers will note several new elements sprinkled into this text—these minor additions are drawn from *Libris Mortis: Book of Undead* and serve to complement the tomb with a dash of contemporary flavor. However, those without access to *Libris Mortis* or those who would prefer to utilize the tomb in its original (if updated) format will be happy to note that these new elements are presented in such a way that they can be used or ignored, as the DM desires, with little impact on the adventure.

To get started, print out the adventure, including the map. Read through the scenario at least once to familiarize yourself with the situation, threats, and major nonplayer characters (particularly their motivations). Some text is designated as player information that you can read aloud or paraphrase for the players at the proper times.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The legend of the tomb is an old story with many parts, some of which may be lost or obscured. Characters attempting to glean special information by consulting sages or through *legend lore* spells may still have difficulty obtaining as much background as they desire,

for the scraps of information are often minimal and mystical.

These bits of information are available as clues, and characters can make of them what they wish: Ancient Burial Places; Ancient Tombs; Sorcerous Kings; Challenges, Surpassing (Certain Death); Soul Eaters; Treasure, Great . . .

The other parts of the legend can be furnished by the Dungeon Master from the description that follows.

THE LEGEND OF THE TOMB OF HORRORS

Somewhere under a lost and lonely hill of grim and foreboding aspect lies a labyrinthine crypt filled with terrible traps and not a few strong and ferocious monsters to slay the unwary. Rich treasures both precious and magical fill the crypt, but in addition to the aforementioned guardians, some say a demilich still wards his final haunt. (Be warned that tales told have it that this being possesses powers that make him nearly undefeatable!) Accounts relate that adventurers have an extremely low probability of ever finding the chamber where the demilich Acererak lingers, for the passages and rooms of the tomb are fraught with terrible traps, poison gases, and magical protections. Furthermore, the demilich has hidden his lair so well, that even those who avoid the pitfalls likely will not locate their true goal. So only large and well-prepared parties of the bravest and strongest should even consider the attempt, and if they do locate the tomb, they must be prepared to fail. Any expedition must be composed of characters of high level and varied class. They must have magical protections and weapons, and they should equip themselves with every sort of device possible to ensure their survival.

POSSIBLE LOCALE OF THE TOMB

- 1) In the Bright Desert
- 2) Somewhere in the Vast Swamp south of Sundi
- 3) In the Vast Swamp of Cormyr
- 4) On a small islet, one of many of the Nethlanther Isles
- 5) In the Crawling Swamp in the Shadow Marches
- 6) Submerged in the Basura Swamp of Q'Barra

WHAT ABOUT RETURN TO THE TOMB OF HORRORS?

It is an utterly viable option to use this update with the information provided in the *Return to the Tomb of Horrors*. In that adventure, the passage of time saw the lonely hill become the foci interest for the necromantically inclined. Those drawn to the area had less interest in exploring the depths of the tomb. Instead, the legend of Acererak himself drew them, and by all accounts

Acererak was a being of surpassing power, holding secrets over Death itself. As time wore on, a community of the like-minded grew up around the mound of the tomb. This was neither a city of pure-hearted seekers of knowledge nor a collection of mere tomb robbers. Instead, those who gathered in this new city of grim aspect sought to understand the forbidden arts of unlfe. They were, in fact, almost all practitioners of the foul dark arts: necromancy. Thus was Skull City born.

The inhabitants of Skull City were obsessed with the power that the dark arts can bring them. Following this philosophy, their reverence for Acererak and his achievements developed into a nearly theological worship of the powerful lich in his aspect as "The Devourer." They have built a massive academy into the no-longer lonely hill over Acererak's tomb and engage in weekly ceremonies to garner the attention and favor of the demilich below. However, for all their evil rituals and dark knowledge, and in spite of their professions of communion with the spirit of the demilich, not a single resident of Skull City possesses a glimmer of the truth. Acererak's true guise, the location of his final stronghold, and his ultimate sinister goal remain utterly unknown—a black mystery to all.

As in *Return to the Tomb of Horrors*, the original tomb remains sacrosanct—those who built up Skull City and the Academy around it revere the tomb. Thus, the information in this update can be used as is, whether or not the DM has access to *Return to the Tomb of Horrors* or prefers not to use it (especially since that product is not updated to 3rd edition rules, but yet lingers in 2nd edition status).

NOTES FOR THE DUNGEON MASTER

As clever players will gather from a reading of the Legend of the Tomb, this dungeon has more tricks and traps than it has monsters to fight. THIS IS A THINKING PERSON'S MODULE, AND IF YOUR GROUP IS A HACK-AND-SLAY GATHERING, THEY WILL BE UNHAPPY!

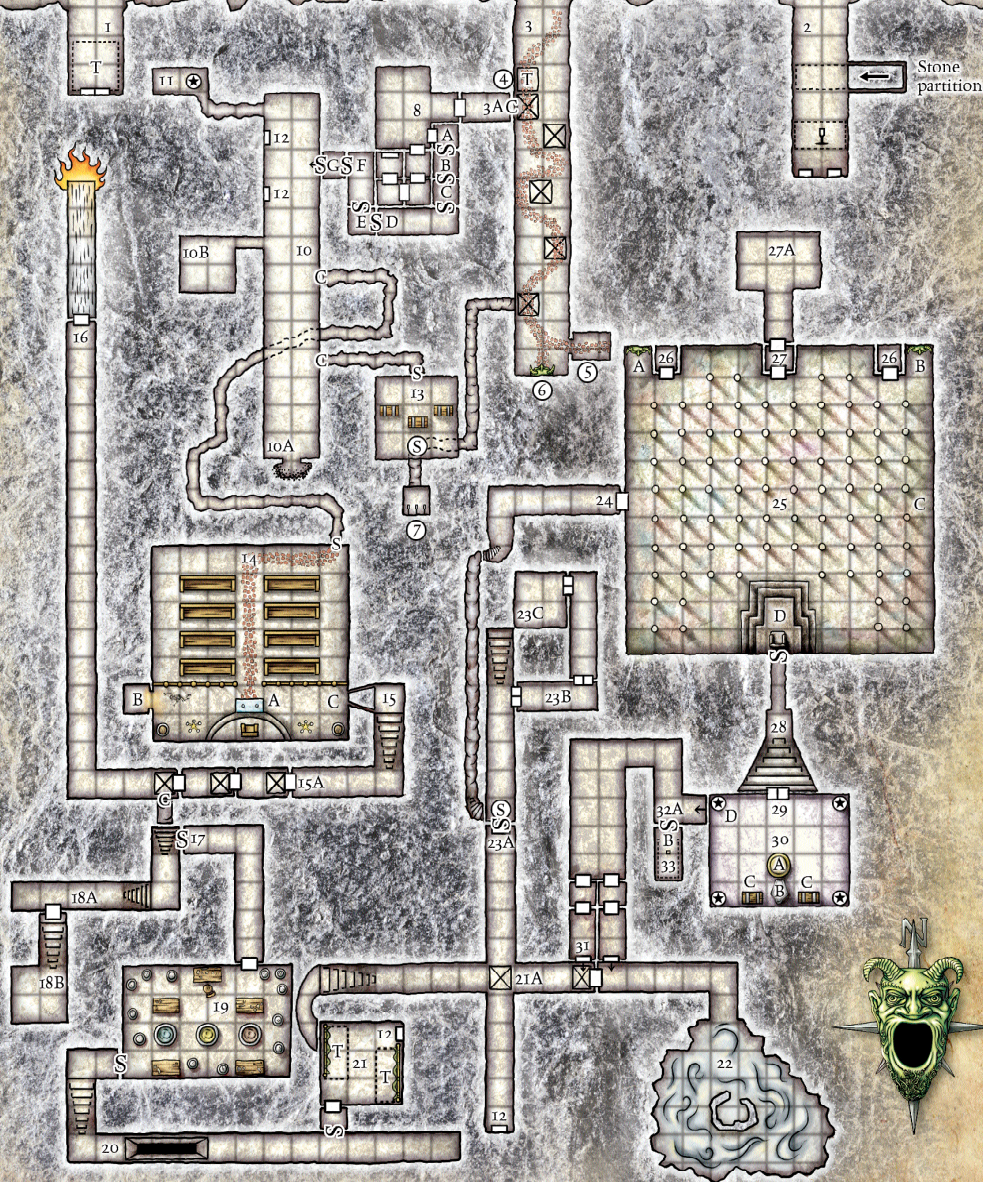
In the latter case, it is better to skip the whole thing than come out and tell them that there are few monsters. On the other hand, brainwork is good for players, and they will benefit from playing this module, for individual levels of skill will be improved by reasoning and experience. If you regularly pose problems better solved by brains and not brawn, your players will find this module immediately to their liking.

Negotiation of the tomb will require quite a long time, so be prepared to spend several sessions with this module. When the game ends for the day, assume the expedition is spending the intervening time until play again commences resting and recovering from

Tomb of Horrors

One square = 10 feet

	Stairs		Secret trap door		Chest		Slick-glazed floor
	Door		Concealed door		Candelabra		Table/desk
	Double doors		Fresco/relief		Pew		Curtain
	One-way door		Sub-passage		Railing		Mosaic path
	False door		Covered pit		Altar		Mist
	False double doors		Pit trap		Chair, Throne		Trigger
	Secret door		Pit		Vat		Pillar
	One-way secret door		Archway		Urn		Statue



adventuring up to that point. Allowing actual/game days on a 1/1 basis gives player characters a chance to recover some lost hit points, too. Since no monsters are randomly encountered within the tomb, the party might be allowed to encamp close to the entrance without fear of random encounters, but if you do so opt, do not inform the players of this.

Please read and review all of the material herein, thoroughly familiarizing yourself with it, before beginning the module. As players enter keyed areas, note from the text whether or not the area has one or more illustrations for visually highlighting play. Read aloud appropriate sections, but never give any additional information that player characters would have no way of knowing, and avoid facial expressions or voice tones that might provide helpful hints or mislead players. The real enjoyment of this module is managing to cope, and those players who do so even semi-successfully will appreciate your refereeing and allowing them to “live or die” on their own.

The starting information for the module depends on whether you are using the tomb as an insertion into your own campaign, as a section in a published fantasy setting (such as GREYHAWK®, FORGOTTEN REALMS®, or the EBERRON® settings), or simply as a one-shot exercise for your players. Because of the variableness, the information for starting is stated so as to assume the expedition has arrived at the site of the Tomb of Horrors. As Dungeon Master, you may fill in whatever background is needed. If the tomb represents a single arc of a campaign, players obtain the Legend information above through research, as normal (such as Gather Information, Knowledge [history], and Knowledge [local] checks made on their behalf, consulting bards and sages, casting *legend lore* spells, or whatever) prior to arriving at the actual locale of the tomb. (When this module was used at Origins I, Dungeon Masters were instructed that the hill had been found in the Vast Swamp, and the party had arrived there in barges.)

KEYED LOCATIONS

The following entries are keyed to the *Tomb of Horrors* map. Areas and items of note are also keyed to a series of illustrations that you, the Dungeon Master, should show to the players as they adventure. Each illustration is numbered to correspond to rooms and locations on the map. The text below instructs you when to reveal a particular illustration.

Demonic Host

PCs are discouraged from bypassing the material walls of the world via the Ethereal Plane by a host of demonic guardians. PCs become aware of the demonic host only

if they attempt an ethereal jaunt while within the hill or tomb. One or more demons arrive and attack, according to the following table (roll randomly) every 1d4 rounds that the characters maintain a presence on the Ethereal Plane while within the tomb.

The demons also serve as tomb caretakers—because of the allegiance they owe the balor named Tarnhem in the Fortress of Conclusion (see *Return to the Tomb of Horrors*), these demons reset traps, repair damage, and otherwise return the tomb to a pristine condition in the event of its invasion by tomb robbers.

d100	Demon/1d4 Rounds	CR	Monster Manual Page #
01–20	2 babaus	8	40
21–40	2 vrocks	11	48
41–60	1 hezrou	11	44
61–80	1 retriever	11	46
81–90	1 glabrezu	13	43
91–100	1 nalfeshnee	14	45

INTERIOR FEATURES

The stonework throughout the dungeon is mostly granite unless the description states differently. The floors, walls, and ceilings are smooth. Unless otherwise noted, the corridor width remains a constant 5 or 10 feet, as shown on the map. Height varies where indicated, but the ceilings are usually 10 feet high in 5-foot-wide halls and 12 feet high in 10-foot-wide halls. The interior doors are constructed of metal-bound oak unless the description says otherwise.

Typical Oak and Iron Door: 2 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 20; break DC 28; Open Lock (when appropriate) DC 30.

Typical Masonry Wall: 1 ft. thick; hardness 8; hp 90; break DC 35; Climb DC 15.

Additionally, magical auras are noted where appropriate; DMs should find this helpful should the characters use spells to detect such things.

A map and all of the graphic illustrations listed throughout the adventure can be found online at the Wizards of the Coast website:

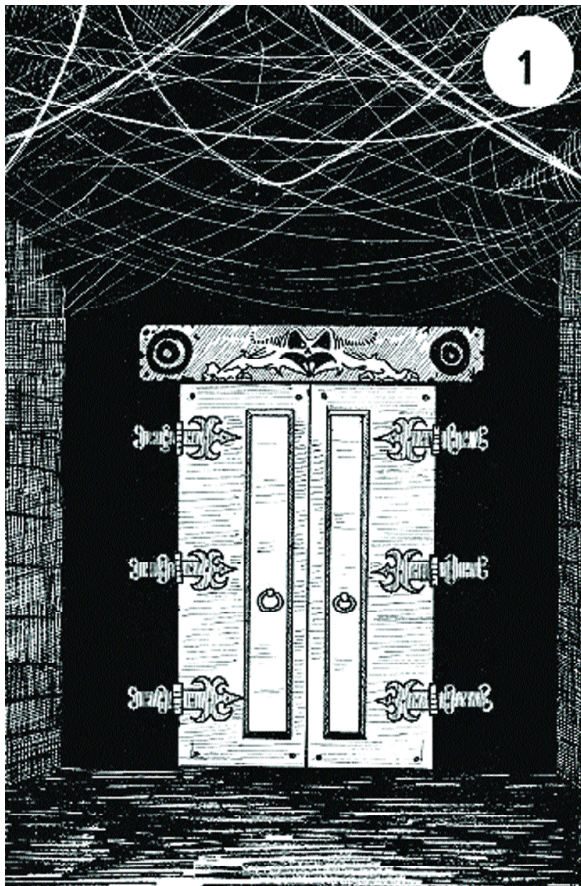
<http://www.wizards.com/default.asp?x=dnd/ag/20051031a>

This map has been reproduced here for your convenience.

O. In Front of the Hill

The party has arrived at the site of the demilich's last haunt.

A low, flat-topped hill, about 200 yards wide and 300 yards long, protrudes from the earth. Ugly weeds, thorns, and briars grow upon the steep sides and bald top of the 60-foot-high mound. Black rocks crown the hilltop



If a perspective of about 200 feet or more above the hill can be achieved, the resemblance of the hill and black rocks upon it to a great human skull becomes apparent, with the piles of rock appearing as eye holes, nose hole, and the jagged teeth of a grinning death's head. Adventurers at ground level may extrapolate this resemblance with a successful DC 21 Intelligence check.

A casual, closer inspection of the hill reveals the following:

The north side of the hill is fronted by a 20-foot-high crumbling cliff of sand and gravel. A low stone ledge overhangs this eroded area, and shrubs and bushes obscure it from observation at a distance.

The north side of the hill with the sand and gravel cliff is the area 34 squares wide that forms the east-west axis of the dungeon map. A complete search of the cliff area exposes one or more (of three) blocked tunnel entrances (DC 20 Search check per entrance successfully located). Once an entrance is exposed, four characters can thoroughly clear out a passage in about an hour and a half, but a narrow crawl space can be opened in just 15 minutes by two characters digging with swords and hands.

1. False Entrance Tunnel (EL 10)

Once the characters clear or crawl through the sand blocking this tunnel, they can see what it contains. Show **graphic #1**.

The roughly worked, plain stone corridor is full of cobwebs. A set of double oaken doors are just visible at the end of the passageway. The roof 20 feet overhead is obscured by hanging strands.

Trap: If the roof (composed of badly fitting stones) is prodded with any force, or if the doors at the far end of the passageway are opened (onto a blank wall), the tunnel roof collapses.

Built-to-Collapse Ceiling: CR 10; mechanical; location trigger; no reset; no attack roll required (16d6, crush); multiple targets (all targets in a 20-ft.-by-20-ft. area); never miss (but DC 23 Reflex for half damage); Search DC 24; Disable Device DC 24.

2. False Entrance Tunnel (EL 8)

Once the characters clear or crawl through the sand blocking this tunnel, they can see what it contains. Show **graphic #2**.

Two separate doors are dimly visible at the end of this roughly worked, plain stone corridor.

Traps: The ceiling in this hallway is 10 feet high. When characters move to within 10 feet of the doors at the end of the hallway, a trigger mechanism in the floor rolls a 10-foot-wide, 20-foot-long stone partition across the chamber from where it was recessed in the east wall (as shown on the map). Characters that react quickly enough (those who succeed on a Reflex check) can decide whether to escape to freedom or remain trapped with slower compatriots. Unfortunately for those who remain behind, the round after the stone partition traps characters in the hallway, the ceiling begins to lower over the course of 4 rounds. Those who cannot free themselves 5 rounds after the stone partition seals the corridor are dealt crushing damage. Possible ways to gain freedom include *phase door* attempts, *disintegrate* attempts, a Strength check to push back the partition (DC 30), and so on. On the other hand, those who succeed on the first trapping room Reflex DC might decide to hold the stone partition back through brute force (requiring a DC 30 Strength check) or with a metal bar (a DC 27 Strength check); on a failed attempt, the stone partition is unhindered.

Trapping Room: CR 6; mechanical; location trigger; automatic reset (1 day); DC 23 Reflex to react (on successful save, a character may rush north down the

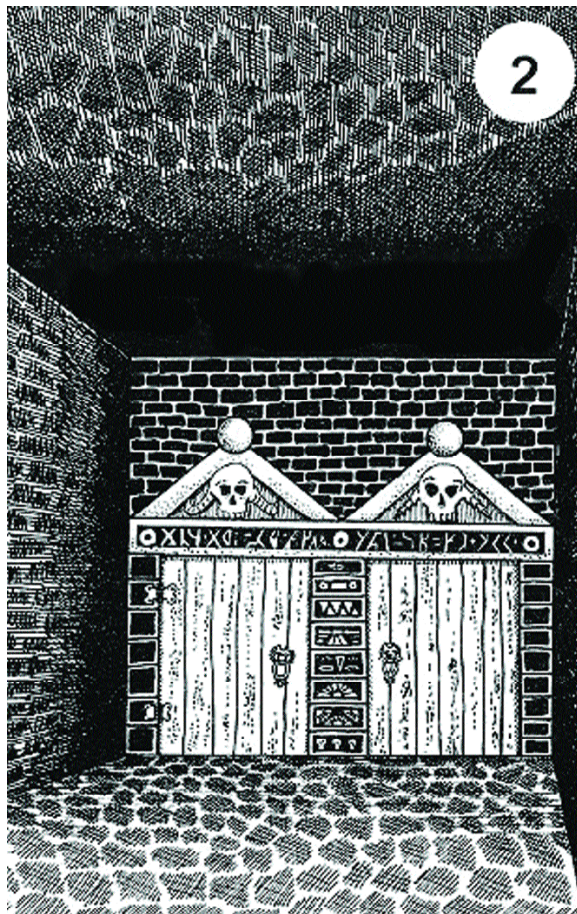
corridor to escape closing stone partition); multiple targets (all targets south of the partition); Search DC 24; Disable Device DC 24.

Compacting Room: CR 6; mechanical; timed trigger; automatic reset; hidden switch bypass (Search DC 25); ceiling moves down (12d6, crush); multiple targets (all targets in a 20-ft.-by-30-ft. area); never miss; onset delay (4 rounds); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 22.

3. Entrance to the Tomb of Horrors (EL Varies)

Once the characters clear or crawl through the sand blocking this tunnel, they can see what it contains. Show **graphic #3**.

Brilliant colors are everywhere; pigments painted on stone are undimmed by the passage of decades. The floor is a colorful mosaic, featuring a distinct, winding path of red tiles forming a 2-foot-wide, meandering trail south down the corridor. A few chips and gaps reveal that cement or plaster covers the underlying stonework of the corridor, and it mostly provides a smooth surface for the many illustrated scenes.



Characters who wish to catalog the many painted scenes adorning the corridor walls see the following:

The images depict fields with cattle grazing, a copse with several wolves in the background, slaves—human, orc, elven, and strange human-animal mixtures of pig-human, ape-human, and dog-human—going about various tasks.

Certain frescoes are more focused and show rooms of some building—a library filled with many books and scrolls, a torture chamber, and a wizard's work room. Chairs, windows, boxes, bales, doors, chests, birds, bats, spiders, and all manner of things appear on the walls.

If characters wish to look more closely at the torture chamber painting (after navigating a small portion of the corridor), refer to entry 3A.

If characters wish to look more closely at the wizard's work room (again, after navigating a small portion of the corridor), refer to entry 4.

Characters standing at the north end of the corridor who succeed on a DC 20 Spot check see that the floor mosaic hides barely noticeable runes: a message in Common. It says the following:

ACERERAK CONGRATULATES YOU ON YOUR POWERS OF OBSERVATION. SO MAKE OF THIS WHATEVER YOU WISH, FOR YOU WILL BE MINE IN THE END NO MATTER WHAT!

Go back to the tormentor or through the arch, and the second great hall you'll discover.

Shun green if you can, but night's good color is for those of great valor.

If shades of red stand for blood the wise will not need sacrifice aught but a loop of magical metal—you're well along your march.

Two pits along the way will be found to lead to a fortuitous fall, so check the wall.

These keys and those are most important of all, and beware of trembling hands and what will maul.

If you find the false you find the true and into the columned hall you'll come, and there the throne that's key and keyed.

The iron men of visage grim do more than meets the viewer's eye.

You've left and left and found my Tomb and now your soul will die.

Trap: Unfortunately for characters wishing to navigate the corridor, the passage is filled with concealed pits. The pits shown on the map are 10 feet deep and concealed by a counterweighted trap door that opens when trod upon.



Poisoned Spiked Pit Trap: CR 6; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; DC 20 Reflex save avoids; 10 ft. deep (1d6, fall); multiple targets (all targets within a 10-ft.-by-10-ft. area); pit spikes (Atk +20 melee, 2d4 spikes per target for 1d4+5 each); poison (DC 24 Fortitude save resists, 1d4 Con/1d6 Con); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 20.

Trap Note 1: The northernmost trap floor doesn't open when trod upon. It does so only if triggered by a hidden lever; see entry 4.

Trap Note 2: The southernmost pit trap is shown on the map to host a small tunnel; however, this one-way passage leads only out of area 7, not into it. Thus, those who fall into this trap do not see an opening, though

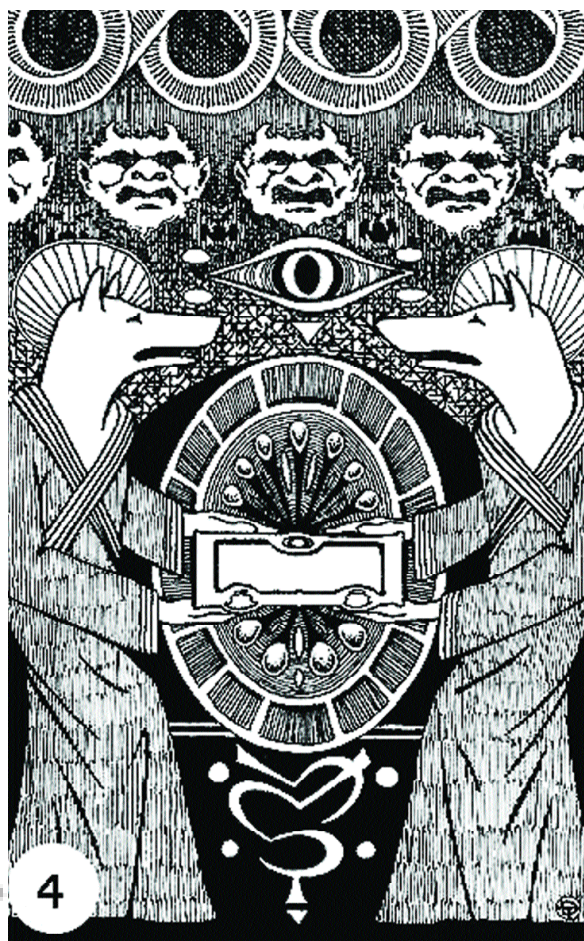
they may detect the edges of a one-way secret door (Search DC 25). Barring the destruction of the 1-foot-thick stone housing of the wall (possible, though difficult) or an DC 30 Open Lock check (or *knock* spell), this passage is useful only for those seeking to escape from room 7.

3A. Torture Chamber Painting

On the western wall of the entry corridor of the tomb, a torture chamber is painted. If players show any interest in this section of the painting at all, refer them again to **graphic #3**.

This portion of the fresco illustrates an iron door that evidently confines some sort of a horrid creature (its clawed and scaled hands grasp the bars of its small window) that can be loosed to torment prisoners.

If the plaster and lath behind the painting of the door is broken, a normal, inward opening door is revealed. This door opens onto a 20-foot-corridor that connects to room 8.



4. Fresco of Wizardly Workroom (EL 7)

On the western wall of the entry corridor of the tomb, north of the torture chamber, a wizard's workroom is painted. If players show any interest in this section of the painting at all, refer them again to **graphic #3** and show **graphic #4**.

Two jackal-headed human figures in this painting are portrayed as if holding bronze chest—which is real, and protrudes slightly into the corridor! The chest is hinged on the bottom so as to allow the lid to swing down.

Trap: The chest's bottom opens if a stud on top is pressed. The stud has an easily detectable poison needle trap (Spot DC 15; poison [DC 21 Fortitude save resists, 1 Con/1d4 Con]; see *Dungeon Master's Guide* page 71 for other statistics), and it can be avoided entirely by pressing the stud with a dagger pommel, or some other object.

When the box opens, it appears to be empty, but if a character actually feels inside the chest, he or she can find a rodlike lever that is affixed vertically from the top of the chest. The lever moves easily, and if it is pulled with any force, a 30-foot-deep pit (spiked and poisoned) opens in the 10-foot area marked on the map (immediately in front of the workroom painting).

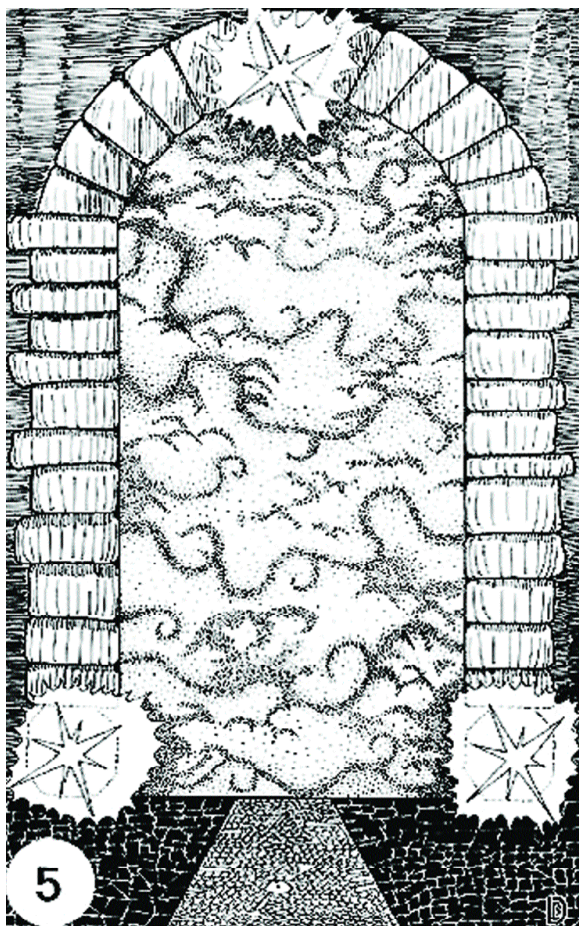
Poisoned Spiked Pit Trap: CR 7; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; DC 20 Reflex save avoids; 10 ft. deep (3d6, fall); multiple targets (all targets within a 10-ft.-by-10-ft. area); pit spikes (Atk +20 melee, 2d4 spikes per target for 1d4+5 each); poison (DC 24 Fortitude save resists, 1d4 Con/1d6 Con); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 20.

Treasure: Lying among the detritus that gathers around spikes at the bottom of the trap are several bones and a layer of dust. A DC 15 Search check through the dust unearths a pair of goggles of day (see page 78 of *Libris Mortis*).

5. The Arch of Mist

At the south end of the corridor, the red tile path bifurcates (at 3B on the map). This fork turns east into an arch of mist, and the other leads into the gaping maw of a great green devil (see entry 6).

A section of the red tile path leads into a mist-filled stone archway. Three large stones are embedded in the arch. Each has a different hue—yellow on the lower left, bluish at the top of the arch, and orange on the lower right.



If any character stands within 5 feet of the entranceway, the base stones glow yellow on the left, orange on the right, and the keystone 7 feet above glows blue. Show **graphic #5** when this happens.

The vapors are magical (conjuration; CL 20th) and short of dispelling them (which only suppresses them for 1d4 rounds), the mists cannot be dispersed. However, *true seeing* or other powerful revelatory magic reveals that the passage continues eastward.

If the archway is entered while it is clouded, those characters doing so are instantly teleported to room 7.

If the glowing stones are pressed in the proper sequence—YELLOW, BLUE, ORANGE—the vapors disappear, and the eastward-leading corridor beyond is revealed.

After pressing the glowing stones in proper sequence, those stepping through the arch ON the red tile path are teleported to room 11, while those who pass through off the path are teleported back to the beginning of the entrance corridor (entry 3).

6. The Face of the Great Green Devil

At the south end of the corridor, the red tile path forks. One section trails into an arch of mist (see entry 5). The other leads to the face of the great green devil. Show **graphic #6**.

A fork of the red tile path leads directly to a leering devil face set in the mosaic at the corridor's end. The devil's mouth gapes wide and empty—in fact it is dead black, emitting no hint of light and allowing none entry.

The mouth opening is similar to a *sphere of annihilation* (page 279 *Dungeon Master's Guide*), but this *sphere* is permanently fixed in place and yawns a little more than 3 feet in diameter—room enough to accommodate those who, pursuing a false hope, leap in where they are completely and forever destroyed.

The whole area radiates evil and magic (necromancy; CL 20th) if a detection attempt is made.

7. The Forsaken Prison (EL 10)

Characters who walk through the mist in area 5 end up here.

This miserable 10-foot-square iron cubicle appears to have absolutely no means of egress. It is bare of all but dust except for three iron levers (each about 1-foot long) on one wall of the chamber.



Discovering the secret trap that covers the floor and the smaller door in the ceiling is quite difficult, requiring characters to beat a Search DC of 35. If the secret exits are discovered, a DC 25 Disable Device check must also be overcome. Or, characters could work the levers to open the exits.

The levers move up or down, singly or in combination.

Only by throwing all three together upwards or downwards are results obtained.

Moving the three levers straight up opens a small trapdoor in the center of the ceiling (10 feet above). The ceiling route is a crawlway some 3 feet square.

Trap: Pushing the three levers simultaneously down opens the entire floor onto a 100-foot-deep pit with no exit, after which the floor automatically returns to a closed position, sealing any inside the pit until another victim triggers the drop-away again, or until a successful DC 25 Disable Device check can be brought to bear upon the doors (possibly made more difficult if no means are at hand to ascend the sheer sides of the 100-foot iron shaft . . .)

Pit Trap: CR 8; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; DC 30 Reflex save avoids (character catches hold of one of the levers); 100 ft. deep (10d6, fall); multiple targets (all targets within a 10-ft.-by-10-ft. area); Search DC 35; Disable Device DC 25.

Creatures: The floor of the pit trap is home to various detritus of past victims, including a colony of voracious tomb motes, who immediately attack any creature that enters their lair. Quarters are tight for full-sized characters, but the tomb motes don't seem to mind . . .

Tomb Motes (8): hp 13; *Libris Mortis* page 128.

Treasure: Hidden in the dust, bones, and rotted remnants of past victims of the trap is a copy of the *Nycoptic Manuscripts* (*Libris Mortis* page 79), which characters who succeed at a DC 18 Search check can find.

Crawlway: The 3-foot-square crawlway revealed when the three levers are moved straight up is shown on the map. The map indicates the crawlway turns east. In that area is a plug in the tunnel's ceiling that is detectable only by those capable of seeing invisible objects who succeed at a DC 25 Spot check (or those who succeed at a DC 25 Search check). If found and opened, the plug provides access up into room 13—however, most will miss this plug. Eventually the small tunnel leads to a one-way door, which opens into the southernmost pit in room 3 as shown on the map. Characters are back to square one . . . Like all one-way doors in this dungeon, the door can still be accessed “from the wrong side” if closed by a successful DC 30 Open Lock check (or *knock* spell).

8. Gargoyle Lair (EL 11)

When any door leading to this room is opened, it frees a mutated four-armed gargoyle from temporal stasis. Show **graphic #8**.

A grotesque, winged humanoid with a horned head and stony hide lunges, its four arms each tipped with wicked rocky claws. Around the creature's neck is a collar studded with huge, gleaming gems.

Creature: The gargoyle viciously attacks characters, pursuing them if possible, until it is defeated or slain. If slain, within a year's time, the demon caretakers of the tomb will have force-bred and installed another, according to the instructions set down by Acererak so long ago.



MUTANT FOUR-ARMED GARGOYLE

CR 11

CE Large humanoid (earth)

Init -1; **Senses** Listen +12, Spot +12

AC 21, touch 8, flat-footed 21

hp 199 (21 HD); **DR** 10/—

Fort +17, **Ref** +5, **Will** +6

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares), fly 60 ft. (average)

Melee 4 claws +24 (2d8+10) and
bite +22 (2d6+5) and
gore +22 (2d6+5)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Base Atk +15; **Grp** +29

Atk Options rend, Awesome Blow, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Sunder, Power Attack

Special Actions freeze, skills

Abilities Str 30, Dex 8, Con 21, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 10

Feats Alertness, Awesome Blow, Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Sunder, Multiattack, Power Attack

Skills Listen +12, Spot +12, Hide +9*

Possessions gem-studded collar

Rend (Ex) If the four-armed mutant gargoyle hits with two or more claw attacks, it briefly latches onto the opponent's body and tears the flesh. This attack automatically deals an extra 2d8+20 points of damage.

Freeze (Ex) A gargoyle can hold itself so still it appears to be a statue. An observer must succeed on a DC 20 Spot check to notice the gargoyle is really alive.

Skills Gargoyles have a +2 racial bonus on Hide, Listen, and Spot checks. *The Hide bonus increases by +8 when a gargoyle is concealed against a background of stone.

Treasure: Around the creature's neck is a collar studded with huge, gleaming gems (blue quartz stones of 100 gp value each, ten gems total). Hidden in a secret compartment of the collar is a slip of parchment with the following written on it in magical runes that require a *read magic* spell to understand:

Look low and high for gold, to hear a tale untold. The archway at the end, and on your way you'll wend.

—A.

9. Complex of Secret Doors (EL Varies)

A total of ten small rooms are connected off room 8 (initially through obvious doors). One of the doors that leads from room 8 goes to a dead end via a series of obvious doors, while the other door in room 8 eventually

provides a route to reach room 10 through a series of secret doors.

The following description applies to each chamber:

This small chamber is empty of scent, stain, or decor. Only the dense layer of dust reveals the uncounted years since any moved through this chamber since the present.

Finding each secret door in each area marked on the map is relatively easy with a DC 25 Search check. However, each secret door is marked on the map by a letter indicating the unique method whereby the door is opened. Each method differs from that of the previous door.

The various secret doors open as follows:

A. Pull down.

B. Pivots centrally.

C. Pull inward and up at bottom.

D. Slides up.

E. Double panels pull inward.

F. Slide left.

G. Seven studs—press all and door opens; 1 and 7 trigger a swinging door trap (which also opens the door).

Note: Contemporary D&D® rules don't normally support the minutia involved in how a particular secret door is opened; however, the essence of this secret door complex requires this level of attention to avoid making the navigation of this area nothing more than a mathematical exercise.

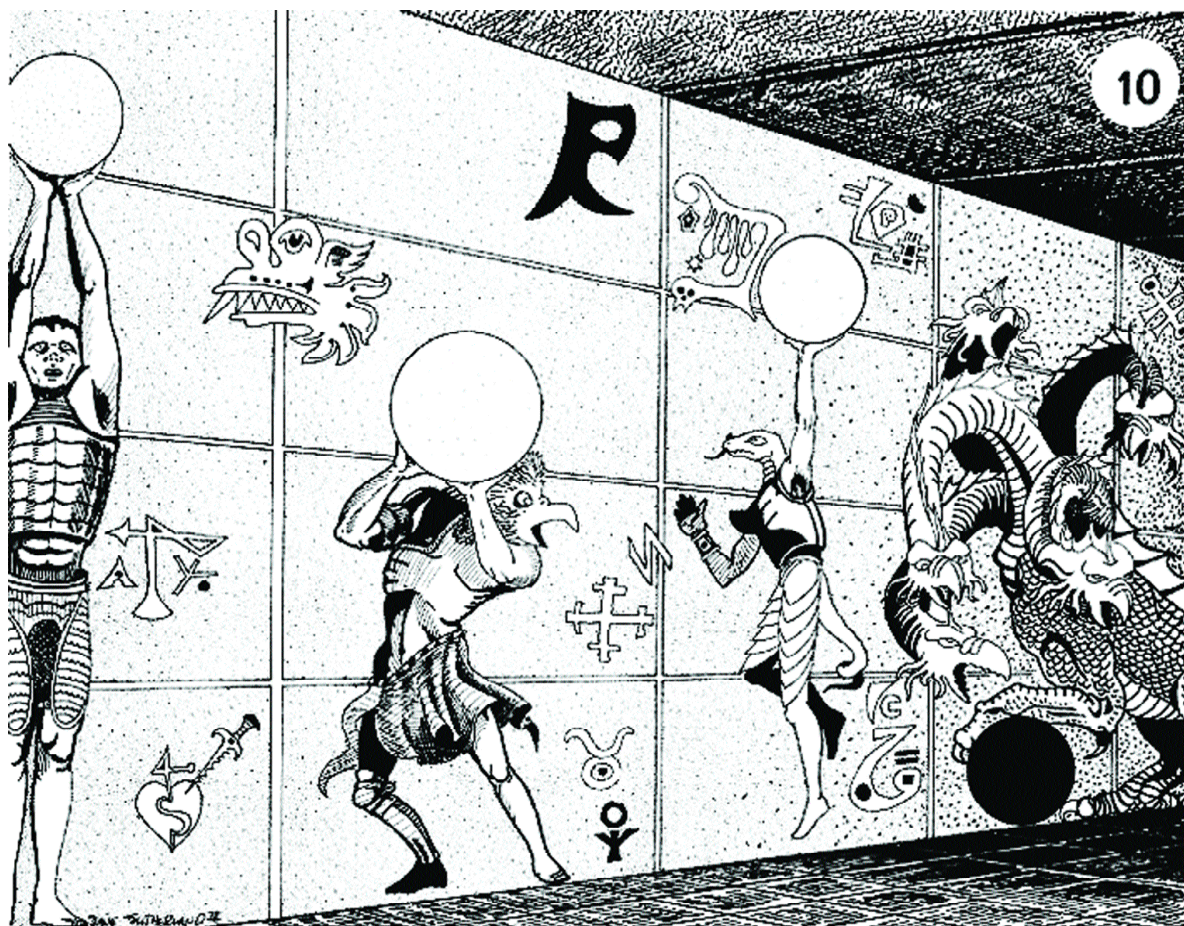
Traps: To further complicate matters, a magic arrow trap contained within each room randomly targets a character in each room each round. Characters may first attempt to disable each of these traps; however, unless the magical effect suffusing each is dispelled (transmutation; CL 20th), a disabled trap reassembles itself in 1d4 rounds.

Magic Arrow Trap (1 trap per room, 11 traps in all): CR 6; magical; proximity trigger (randomly targets 1 character in each room); automatic reset (1 round reset time); Atk +15 ranged (1d8/X3, arrow); Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 25.

Swinging Door Trap: CR 1; mechanical; action trigger (pushing studs 1 and 7); manual reset; Atk +10 melee (2d6, stone door); Search DC 26; Disable Device DC 26.

10. Great Hall of Spheres

Characters can gain entry to this room through area 9 or 13. Once they enter, show **graphic #10** and read them the following text:



The floor of this long, wide hall is inlaid with tiles, and the walls and ceiling are painted with figures of animals and strange signs and glyphs. Humans and humanlike creatures hold painted spheres, each a different color from the next.

Some of the spheres are merely painted walls as they appear. Others are illusory (illusion; CL 20th) and are easily bypassed with a touch.

The figures and their corresponding spheres appear as follows on the west wall, from north to south:

GOLD sphere held above head by a naga. The sphere is an illusory veil (see above) covering a crawlway to room 11.

ORANGE sphere held waist high by a mummy. The sphere is an illusory veil covering a false door leading to a spear trap (see entry 12).

PURPLE sphere held at feet by a minotaur.

BRONZE sphere held waist high by a nymph. The sphere is an illusory veil covering a false door leading to a spear trap (see entry 12).

GRAY sphere held at shoulder by an owlbear.

BRIGHT BLUE sphere held at feet by a sahuagin. The sphere is an illusory veil covering a crawlway leading to room 10B (not shown on map as it's an optional encounter using *Libris Mortis*). Any character that stands next to this sphere (whether she pierces the veil or not) is subject to a *dominate person* attempt (DC 18 Will save). See entry 10B for more information.

WHITE sphere held above head by a red slaad.

TURQUOISE sphere held at shoulder by a satyr.

SCARLET sphere held waist high by a mind flayer.

PALE GREEN sphere held at feet by a medusa.

The figures and their corresponding spheres appear as follows on the east wall, from north to south:

PALE BLUE sphere held at shoulder by a werewolf.

SILVER sphere held at feet by a four-armed gargoyle. The sphere is an illusory veil covering the secret one-way door leading to area 9. Like all one-way doors in this dungeon, the door can still be accessed "from the wrong side" if closed by a successful DC 30 Open Lock check (or *knock* spell).

Note: The following 4 spheres are shown on **graphic #10**.

GREEN sphere held high above head by a half-orc.

YELLOW sphere held at shoulder by a falcon-headed creature.

PINK sphere held high above head by a yuan-ti.

BLACK sphere held at feet by a hydra. The sphere is an illusory veil covering a crawlway leading to area 14.

PALE VIOLET sphere held at shoulder by a kuo-toa.

RED sphere held waist high by a skeleton. The sphere is an illusory veil covering a crawlway leading to area 13.

BUFF sphere held at feet by a white-bearded human wizard.

INDIGO sphere held high above head by a bat-winged woman.

10A. Magic Archway

At the south end of the corridor is an arch of mist.

A mist-filled stone archway lies at the end of the wide hall of colored spheres. Three large stones are embedded in the arch. Each has a different hue—olive on the lower left, russet at the top of the arch, and citron on the lower right.

If any character stands within 5 feet of the entranceway, the base stones glow olive on the left and citron on the right, while the keystone 7 feet above glows russet. Show **graphic #5** when this happens.

The vapors are magical (conjunction; CL 20th) and short of dispelling them (which only suppresses them for 1d4 rounds), the mists cannot be dispersed. However, *true seeing* or other powerful revelatory magic reveals that beyond the arch is only a blank wall.

No matter which stones are pressed in what order, the archway remains clouded and veiled.

All living matter that passes beneath the arch is teleported to area 3, while nonliving matter is teleported simultaneously to room 33. In other words, characters stepping through appear in the entry tunnel without equipment and nude, while everything else appears in the crypt of the demilich. (While cruel, it is most entertaining for the DM. . .)

10B. Brain in a Jar (EL 4)

The crawlway opens into a cluttered, forgotten 20-foot by 20-foot chamber.

Note: This is an optional encounter using material from *Libris Mortis*; it is not depicted on the map.

Dust covers the remains of a wizard's storeroom like snow. Fallen shelves, smashed crockery, glass shards from dozens of smashed potion vials, and corroded alchemical tools litter the floor. However, in the northwest corner of the room, something gray and shriveled sloshes within a grimy glass canister.

Creatures: Acererak experimented with other ways to find immortality before settling on lichdom—the preserved brain in a jar found in this chamber is one of those early, forgotten experiments.

The disembodied brain in a jar found in this chamber is described on page 90 of *Libris Mortis*. The brain in the jar is quite mad, and it initially attempts to *dominate* the first creature it senses at the mouth of the tunnel leading into this chamber. (It can sense through the illusory veil without difficulty.) If successful, the brain orders its newly dominated slave to make no overt reaction, but to later attack its fellows as sneakily as possible, and bring their remains back to the chamber. Otherwise it uses its mind thrust ability on any other creature in range that it can sense.

Brain in a Jar: hp 19; *Libris Mortis* page 90.

Treasure: The remains of past victims of the brain in a jar are strewn about this chamber. A DC 15 Search check brings to light a bag of cut sapphires worth a total of 2,000 gp, a scroll of *restoration*, and a white *bodak's* eye graft (see page 80 of *Libris Mortis*) swimming in an oily fluid in a crusted glass jar. Unlike the eye described in *Libris Mortis*, this eye has only three uses left in it before it fully rots away.

11. Three-Armed Statue

The crawlway opens into small chamber that contains a sculpture (show **graphic #11**):

A broken, 8-foot-tall statue of a four-armed gargoyle squats here, alone and in the dark. Its three remaining hands appear as if in positions of supplication, or need.

A DC 18 Spot check reveals the broken-off fourth arm of the statue on the floor nearby. The statue emanates magic if the PCs use a means of detection (transmutation and conjunction; CL 20th).

No amount of fooling with the broken arm enables its reattachment. However, a DC 15 Spot check reveals a concavity in the palm of each of the three still-attached hands. The concavities are each about 1 inch in diameter, but are empty. The broken hand possesses no such concavity.

Development: Experimentation or a DC 20 Intelligence check suggests that each concavity is the perfect size for a large gem (at least 100 gp value).

If three large gems of any mineral variety are placed within the hands, the stony digits close and crush them to powder, dump the grains on the floor, and return to their initial positions. If this is repeated twice more, and nine gems are so crushed, the tenth triggers the statue to speak the following words in harshly accented Common:



"YOUR SACRIFICE WAS NOT IN VAIN. LOOK TO THE FOURTH TO FIND YOUR GAIN."

As these words are spoken, an invisible *gem of seeing* appears in the palm of the broken-off arm of the statue. The gem can be discovered only by feel with a successful DC 21 Search check (or if someone can see invisible objects). Once found, the *gem of seeing* must be wiped free of a magical substance causing its invisibility before it can be seen or used.

Note that if the arm is carelessly moved, the gem falls off and rolls to a corner of the chamber, potentially alerting characters by the sound it makes that something strange is going on.

The *gem of seeing*, once wiped clean and visible, is an oval diamond, with two flat and polished sides, very clear, and about 1 inch in diameter by 1/4-inch thick. Unlike standard *gems of seeing*, it operates multiple times per day, but only for a total of twelve times for a period of 1 minute with each use, then shatters.

12. Trapped False Door (EL 7)

At this location, as well as several others throughout the tomb, a false door hides a spear trap.

Trap: When one of these doors is opened, the trap is triggered. Show **graphic #12** in each case.

Fusillade of Spears: CR 7; magic device (conjunction; CL 20th); touch trigger (when door is opened); automatic reset; Atk +23 ranged (1d8, spear); multiple targets (1d6 spears per target in a 30-ft. cone emanating from the opened door); Search DC 28; Disable Device DC 20.

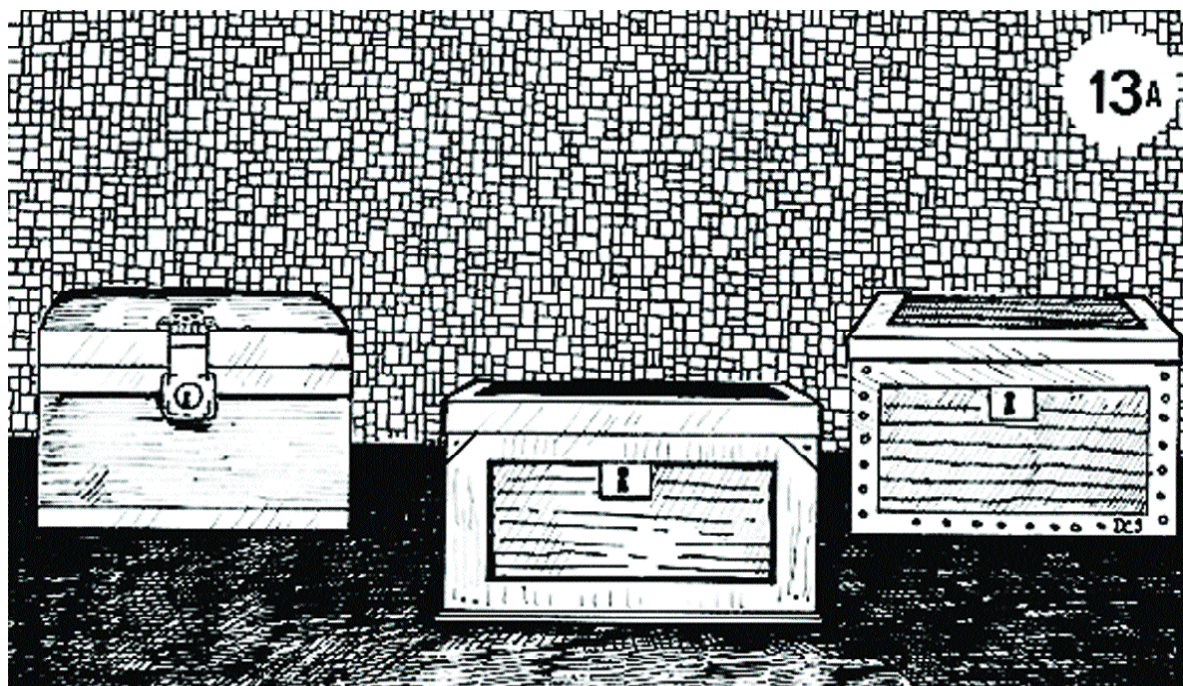
13. Chamber of Three Chests (EL Varies)

The crawlway veiled by the illusory red sphere in room 10 comes to an apparent dead end, though a DC 20 Search check easily reveals the secret door leading to room 12.

Trap: Opening the secret door triggers the annoying falling trap that deposits all those affected into this room. (Room 13 is set 10 feet below the level of the room 10 and the connecting crawlway.)

Falling Trap: CR 1; mechanical; touch trigger (when secret door is opened); automatic reset; DC 20 Reflex save avoids; 10-ft. deep (1d6, fall); multiple targets (affects all characters in two adjacent 10-foot sections of the crawlway closest to the secret door); Search DC 24; Disable Device DC 20.



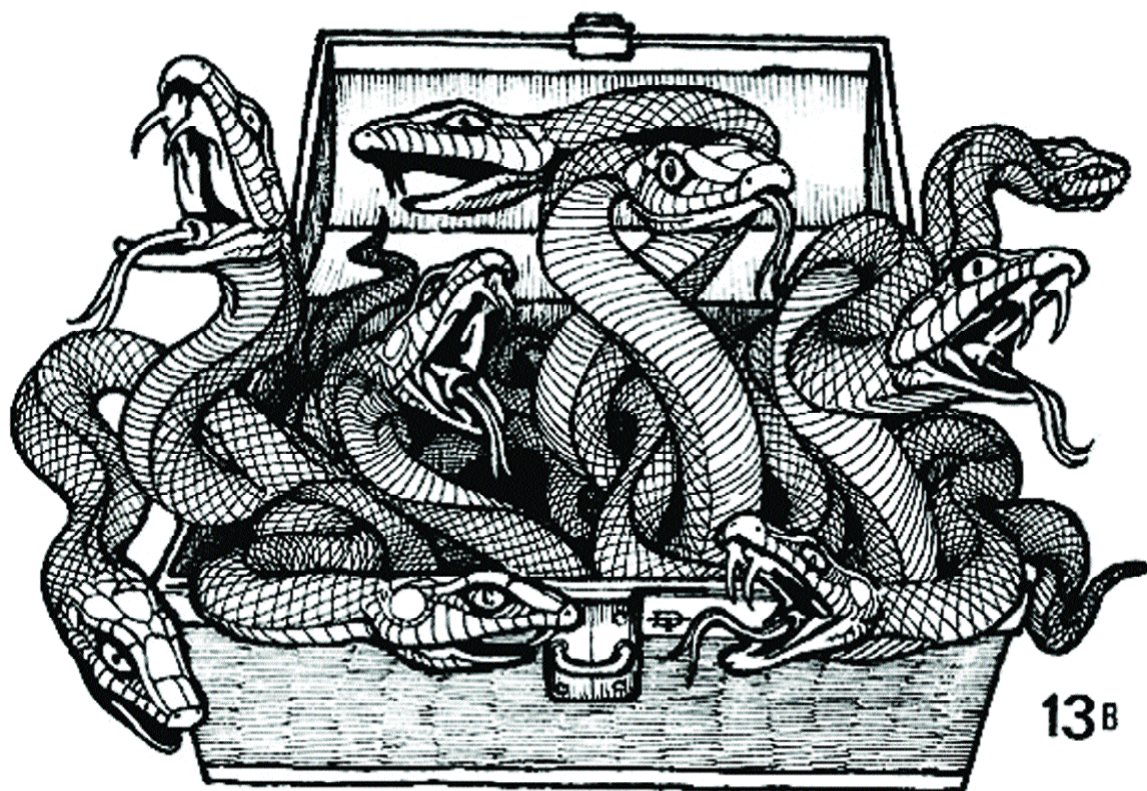


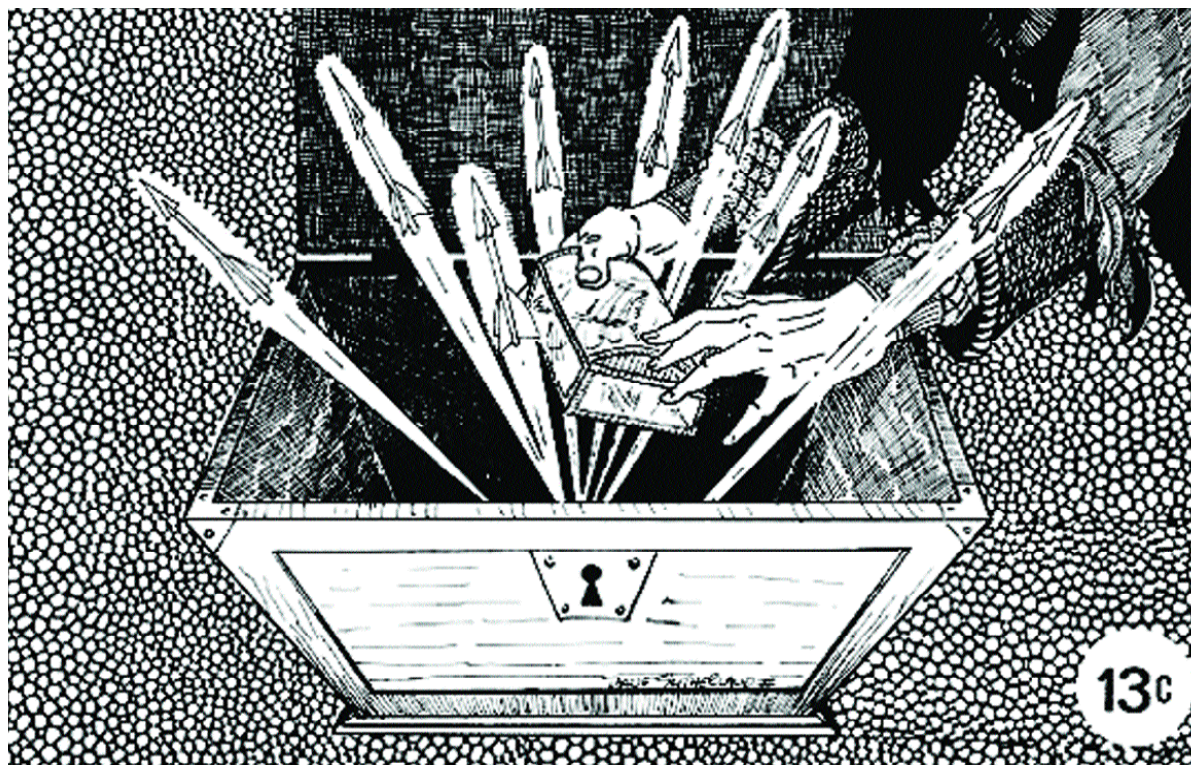
Those that fall into or enter room 13 see **graphic #13A**:

The chamber is bare but for three conspicuous chests, each about 4 feet long, 2 feet wide, and 3 feet deep. One appears to be of gold, the second is silvery, and the third is constructed of hardy oak banded with thick bronze.

Each of the three chests offers its own challenge. Each “chest” is affixed to the floor—in fact, each is a dungeon feature, not a separate moveable object.

A DC 25 Search check locates a floor plug in the chamber that leads down into a crawlway described in room 7. The crawlway leads between room 7 and the southernmost pit described in room 3.





Gold Chest

This chest emanates magic of the school of conjuration (CL 20th). When opened, this chest automatically summons twelve tiny vipers, who are tougher and have more potent poison than normal.

Creatures: If the snakes are summoned, show **graphic #13B**.

Tiny Vipers, Snakes (12): hp 9 (not 1); Fortitude save to resist poison is 12 (not 10); *Monster Manual* page 280.

Silver Chest

This chest does not detect as magical. When opened, this chest doesn't reveal its trap—only when the revealed clear crystal box containing a silver ring is lifted clear of the box is the fusillade of darts trap triggered.

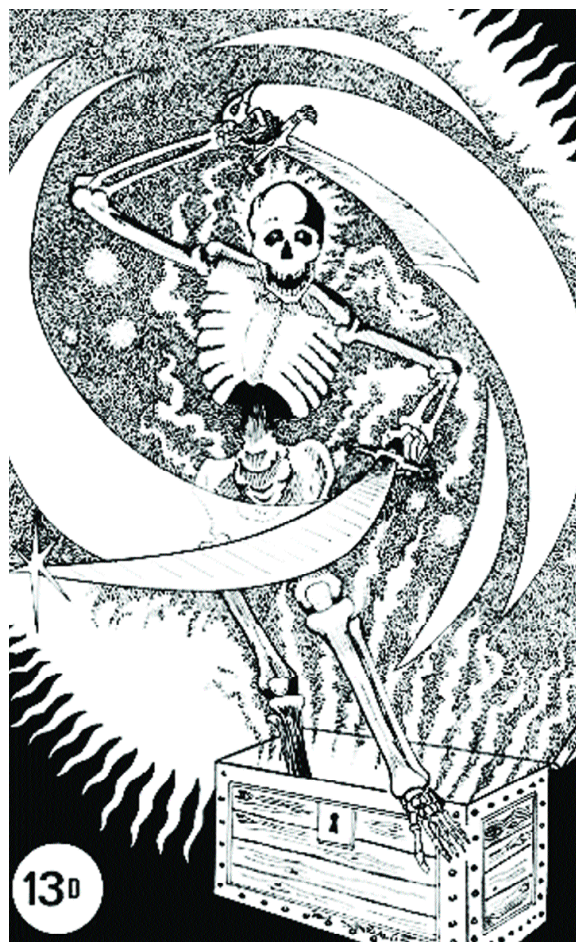
Trap: If the trap is triggered, show **graphic #13C**.

Fusillade of Darts Trap: CR 5; mechanical; action trigger; manual reset; Atk +18 ranged (1d4+1, dart); multiple targets (1d8 darts per target anywhere in room 13); Search DC 19; Disable Device DC 25.

Treasure: The silver chest holds a clear crystal box (itself worth 1,000 gp) in which nestles a *ring of protection* +1.

Wood Chest

This chest emanates magic of the school of conjuration (CL 20th). When opened, this chest automatically summons a scimitar-wielding bone golem (though it looks like the skeleton of a giant). If the bone golem is summoned, show **graphic #13D**.



Creature: The bone golem summoned when the chest is opened fights until destroyed.

BONE GOLEM, SCIMITAR SLASHER

CR 9

N Large construct

Init –1; **Senses** low-light vision

AC 22, touch 8, flat-footed 22

hp 90 (11 HD); **DR** 5/adamantine and bludgeoning

Immune to spells that allow spell resistance

Fort +3, **Ref** +2, **Will** +3

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares)

Melee 2 great scimitars +14 (1d8+7/18–20)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Base Atk +8; **Grp** +19

Special Actions haste

Abilities Str 24, Dex 9, Con —, Int —, Wis 11, Cha 1

Feats —

Skills —

Immunity to Magic (Ex) A bone golem is immune to any spell or spell-like ability that allows spell resistance.

Haste (Su) The bone golem can *haste* itself after 1 full round of combat, as the spell, giving it a +1 bonus on attack rolls and a +1 dodge bonus to AC and Reflex saves, and one extra attack with one of its scimitars if it takes no movement each round.

14. Chapel of Evil (EL 11)

The crawlway veiled by the illusory black sphere in room 10 comes to an apparent dead end, though a DC 26 Search check reveals the secret door leading to room 14. Opening the secret door reveals a temple area. The room is broken up into the larger northern chapel and the narrower southern chapel.

Northern Chapel

Read the following aloud when the characters enter the area:

Chapel accoutrements fill this chamber, including great wooden pews on either side of a central mosaic path that leads toward an altar on the far side of the room, which is separated from the pews by a wooden railing. Scenes of everyday life are painted on the walls, but all the people are portrayed with rotting flesh, skeletal hands, and worm-ridden orifices. Yet depicted amidst these disturbing portraits are various symbols of readily recognized benevolent deities.

The symbols of the various gods painted on the sides walls (pick several good gods native to your campaign) radiate a faint aura of good.

Pews: The pews are heavy, uncomfortable wooden seats. A DC 21 Search check reveals each is hinged, and they open to reveal a hollow interior. The northernmost pair of pews each hold 4,000 sp. The next pair each contain 500 gp. The third pair each contains 2,000 gp, and the front pair are trapped and contain nothing.

Poison Gas Traps (2): CR 7; magic device (transmutation; CL 20th); action trigger (when either southernmost pew is opened); automatic reset; gas; multiple targets (all targets in the northern chapel); never miss; onset delay (3 rounds); poison gas (DC 18 Fortitude save resists, 2d4 Str drain/2d4 Str); Search DC 24; Disable Device DC 21.

Southern Chapel

Characters who direct their attention to the southern part of the chapel see the following:

Behind the wooden railing is an opalescent blue altar, which is set before a tiered dais that supports a well-carved and padded wooden chair. Two large brass candelabra, each holding five white candles, stand on either side of the dais. Two large white pottery urns, each stoppered with brass, sit in each corner. A human skeleton wearing badly rusted and torn black chainmail lies dead in the southwestern portion of the room, one outstretched arm seeming to point into a mist-filled arch on the southern end of the west chapel wall.

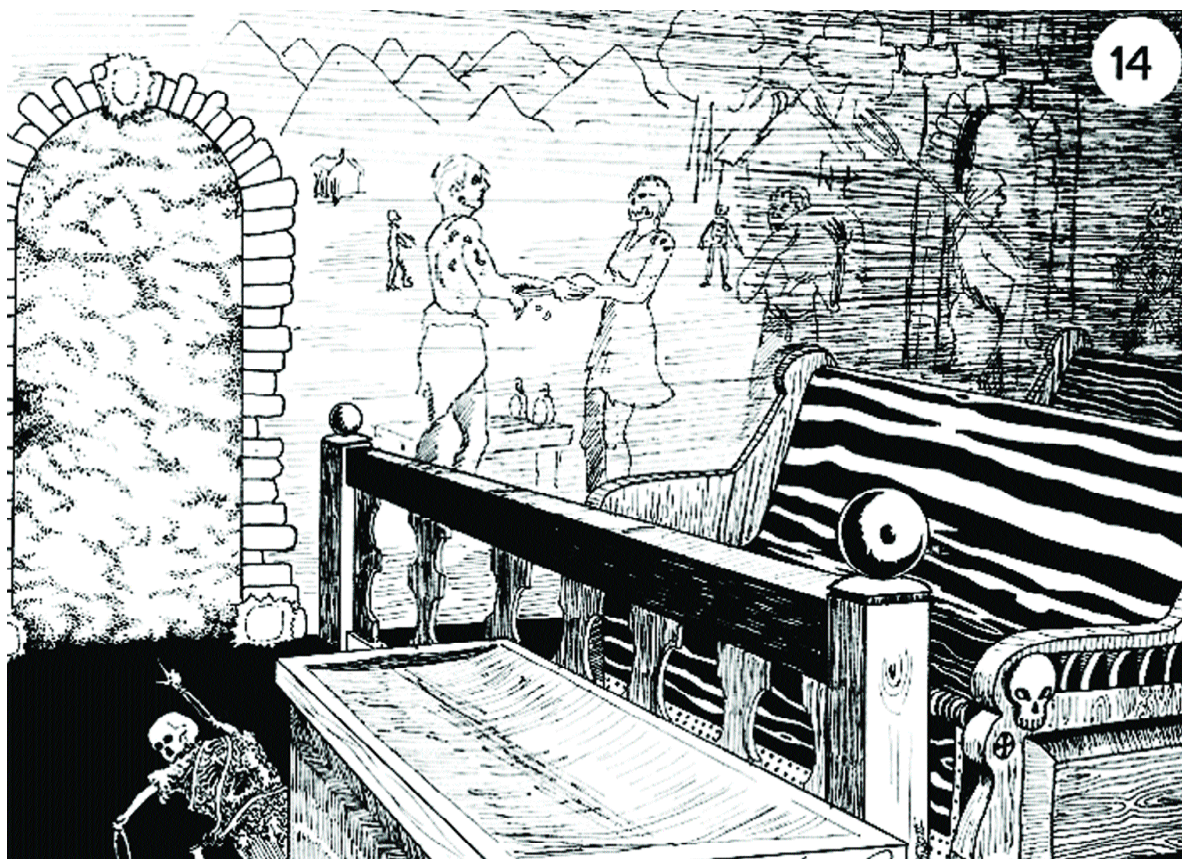
Once characters have moved to stand on the south side of the wooden railing, show them **graphic #14**. A lot is going on in the southern chapel, and each important piece is broken up below.

A. Opalescent Blue Altar: This block of artificial material glows with inner blue light. The altar radiates a faint aura of evil. Essentially, the altar functions as two consecutive traps: a lightning bolt trap and an exploding altar trap.

Lightning Bolt Altar Trap: CR 10; magic device; touch trigger; automatic reset; spell effect (*lightning bolt*, 10th-level wizard (maximized), 40-ft.-long 10-ft.-wide lightning bolt fires up aisle toward Northern Chapel, 60 electricity, DC 14 Reflex save half damage); Search DC 28; Disable Device DC 28.

Exploding Altar Trap: CR 6; magic device; touch trigger (2nd touch) if lightning bolt trap already discharged; automatic reset (1 day); spell effect (fireball, 10th-level wizard, 10d6 fire [20-ft.-diameter fireball around altar], DC 14 Reflex save half damage); Search DC 28; Disable Device DC 28.

B. Archway of Glowing Orange: You can show the players **graphic #5** when their PCs closely examine this arch, though none of the stones glow, even



when characters move close. The arch is filled with a vivid, luminescent orange mist.

The vapors are magical (conjunction; CL 20th) and short of dispelling them (which only suppresses them for 1d4 rounds), the mists cannot be dispersed. However, *true seeing* or other powerful revelatory magic reveals that the passage continues westward into a 10-foot by 10-foot chamber with no exit.

If the characters follow the “advice” of the pointing skeleton, a powerful effect requires each character making the trip to make two DC 20 Will saving throws, though characters can choose not to resist the effect. If the first save is failed, the alignment of the wearer is altered as radically as possible — see the advice on page 275 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* under the *helm of opposite alignment*. If a character passing through the arch for the first time fails the second saving throw, the character's gender switches (characters with no gender, such as dromites, are unaffected).

Passing through the arch a second time (perhaps to leave the 10-foot by 10-foot room) restores the character's original alignment (no saving throw) and deals 1d6 points of damage, while passing under the arch yet a third time restores the character's original gender (no saving throw) but instantly teleports the character as if they had passed through arch 10A.

Characters who enter the arch (or are thrown through by mischievous companions) a fourth time begin the process anew. The spells *remove curse*, *wish*, and *miracle* (or the psionic power *bend reality*) can restore a character to normal, too. (*Psychic surgery* could restore just alignment.)

C. Slotted Secret Door: A successful DC 21 Search check of the eastern wall in this area reveals a small slot with the letter ‘O’ faintly traced above it. The slot is of sufficient size to accept a coin or a flat gem. It is also just right for insertion of a magic ring. This slot opens the passage to the east, as described under entry 15 below, if a magic ring is pushed through it.

Urns: The western urn along the south wall is empty, but the eastern urn along the south wall contains a surprise. If opened, two bloodmote cloud swarms emerge and attack the opener.

Bloodmote Clouds (2): hp 65 each; *Libris Mortis* page 88.

Amidst the ashes at the bottom of the urn lies a bright red stone on a gold chain: a *periapt of wound closure*.

15. Stone Gate

A mass of stone in the shape of a great wedge (2-feet wide, 4-feet high, and 10-feet thick) fills the cone-shaped

passage shown on the map. A powerful *antimagic field* (abjuration; CL 20th) infuses the stone, rendering it almost immune to magical tampering. The wedge's 2-foot wide, 4-foot high leading edge is actually flush with the wall in room 14, and it is situated directly below the slot described in 14C.

If a ring is pushed through the slot in room 14, the magical mechanism controlling the gate triggers, and the great stone wedge sinks into the floor, allowing entry into the passage. However, the ring (and anything previously pushed through) is crushed and destroyed by the sinking stone.

If the stone gate is approached from the south (instead of from the chapel), a mere shove causes the block to sink into the floor, allowing easy access back.

15A. Trapped Corridor (EL 3)

A series of three doors each open onto a pit immediately west of each door. The doors are each slightly stuck (not locked or barred), and require a DC 15 Strength check to force open. However, if the character or characters who force a door successfully are not specifically prepared to pull up short after the Strength check, the character or characters must next succeed on a DC 20 Reflex save to avoid triggering and plunging into the pit traps.

Traps: By the time a party moving west reaches the third door and associated pit trap, they may be conditioned to simply avoid the trap and pit; however, this third pit trap contains a secret door (DC 24 Search check) that opens onto another section of the tomb, as shown on the map.

Camouflaged Pit Traps (3): CR 1; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; DC 20 Reflex save avoids; 10 ft. deep (1d6, fall); Search DC 24; Disable Device DC 20.

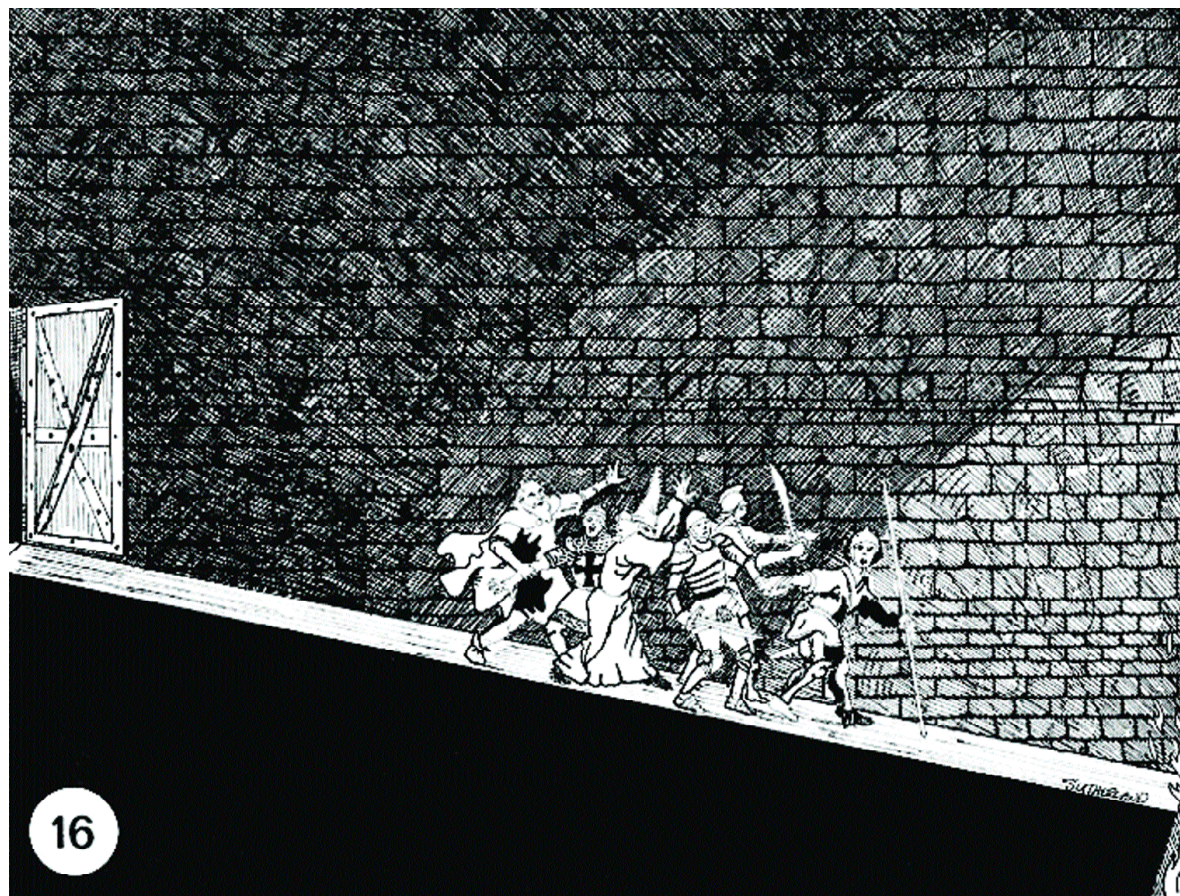
16. Locked Oaken Door (EL 10)

A door heavily bound with iron bands and several locks blocks the corridor.

Characters who succeed on a DC 18 Listen check hear far-off music and happy singing, obviously emanating from somewhere beyond. These noises are a facet of a magic trap in the corridor beyond purposely audible from this side of the door.

The door is locked and requires an exceptional effort to break due to its heavy reinforcement. Chopping the door to pieces requires attackers to overcome the reinforced door's hardness and hit points to create a hole large enough for a Medium creature to squeeze through.

Oaken Door: 6 in. thick; hardness 7; hp 100; break DC 31; Open Lock DC 41.



The door radiates magic (abjuration; CL 20th). Unless dispelled, the magical ward prevents opening spells, including *knock*, from having any effect whatever on the door. However, the door is vulnerable to *disintegrate* or even a *passwall*.

If the door is destroyed or bypassed, observers see the corridor continues north. However, the magic trap operating in this corridor moves into a new phase: The sounds of music and happy singing cease, replaced by the sounds of great confusion (a clatter, the sound of a few people talking at once, the words almost comprehensible) and running (away, north up the corridor), in conjunction with a faint receding glow (very like a torch) apparently 50 feet away, and evidently receding quickly.

If characters hang back, the noise and light fades—whoever was making the noises apparently escaped. Those taking the time to examine the corridor even casually note the passage is of smooth white alabaster, and the floor here is a highly polished smoke-gray marble.

Trap: Characters lured into the corridor 30 or more feet activate the primary trap. If characters activate the trap, show the players **graphic #16**.

Counterweight Corridor Trap: CR 10; magic device; location trigger (when 1 or more characters step 30 feet down the corridor and overbalance the counterweighted beam on which corridor is constructed, causing victims to slide forward into lava pit); automatic reset; DC 25 Reflex save avoids (indicating those characters have ran back south out of the area); 30 ft. deep pit of lava (20d6 fire damage/round for total immersion, 10d6 fire damage per round for 1d3 rounds after emerging); multiple targets (first target in each of two adjacent squares); Search DC 24; Disable Device DC 27.

17. Magical Secret Door

A secret door goes east off the top of a stairwell as shown on the map. The secret door enjoys an extra measure of obscurity in the form of a concealing spell (abjuration; CL 20th). This means only exceptional Search checks can locate the door (DC 30 Search check), though a Search check with the aid of a *true seeing* effect requires only a DC 20. However, the door also enjoys protections similar to the door described in entry 16.

The door is locked and requires an exceptional effort to break due to its heavy reinforcement. Chopping the door to pieces requires attackers to overcome the reinforced door's hardness and hit points to create a hole large enough for a Medium creature to squeeze through.

Oaken Door: 6 in. thick; hardness 7; hp 100; break DC 31; Open Lock DC 41.

The door radiates magic (abjuration; CL 20th). Unless dispelled, the magical ward prevents opening

spells, including *knock*, from affecting the door. However, the door is vulnerable to *disintegrate* or even *passwall*.

18. Fearsome Corridor

Characters who come to the top of the stairs of the west leading corridor see the following:

The western portion of this corridor is filled with slowly roiling, pale white clouds.

The mist obscures the final 20 feet of the western corridor, but characters do not initially know that. Characters may also see that a faint haze extends all the way to the top of the stairs of the west-leading corridor (DC 21 Spot check). Unless characters announce an intention to hold their breath or otherwise can avoid breathing in the gas, they must succeed on a DC 23 Fortitude save or become panicked for 5 rounds. (Panic characters take a -2 penalty on attack rolls, saving throws, skill checks, and ability checks, and they run away from the source of their fear as quickly as they can.)

The gas is mundane, but magically conjured (conjurati on; CL 20th), and unless dispelled, even dispersing the gas with wind or through other means only buys 1d4 rounds of clear air. Opening the door to room 18A also temporarily suppresses the conjuration of new gas into the area.

18A. False Crypt (EL Variable)

Unless the gas in area 18A is dispersed (however briefly), the door hidden by the clouds of gas is discoverable via a DC 15 Search check. When the door is found and opened, characters see the following:

Thick webs choke a musty stairwell leading downward.

The webs completely clog the 20 feet of stairs that lead down into room 18A. The webs are magical (conjuration; CL 20th); treat them as a product of a *web* spell (see page 301 of the *Player's Handbook*).

If the webs are burned, dispelled, or otherwise bypassed, those who move down to the foot of the stairs can see the rest of the chamber:

A lone mace lies at the foot of the stairs, which is the entrance to a decayed crypt furnished with rotting divans, broken chairs, and other refuse. All has gone to rot, save for a golden couch on which resides a humanoid clothed in funerary wrappings with a crown upon its head. A jade coffer lies at the foot of the couch.



18

The moment any character steps into the chamber, attacks into the chamber through mundane or magical means, or picks up the mace (see *mace of lich smiting*), a series of events, magically primed (transmutation; CL 20th), trigger.

First, the figure (a false Acererak) on the couch begins to rise. Show **graphic #18**. A booming voice simultaneously asks the following:

“WHO DARES DISTURB ACERERAK’S REST?
YOU HAVE FOUND DEATH.”

Creature: The false Acererak attacks characters until destroyed. The false Acererak is particularly susceptible to the *mace of lich smiting* (see the mace’s description). See Development if the false Acererak is destroyed.

False Acererak: hp 74; see sample lich stats on page 166 of the *Monster Manual*.

Tactics: The false Acererak enters combat flinging its most potent spells, beginning with *disintegrate*, then *cone of cold*, and so on. However, if any character holds the *mace of pretense*, the false Acererak must succeed on a Concentration check with each spell it casts (DC 21 + level of spell cast) or the spell fails. The false Acererak visibly shrinks from and avoids the wielder of the *mace of lich smiting*.

Development: If the mace destroys the false Acererak, the figure instantly withers and disappears in a puff of smoke, and the mace shatters. At the same moment, read or paraphrase the following to your players:

The room begins to shake and stones rain down from the ceiling. A tremor shoots from north to south through the room, and something grinds in the ceiling. More hunks of stone fall from the ceiling, and the rumbling noise begins to grow, and grow . . .

The effect is an in-place dungeon delusion effect (illusion; CL 20th). Count down slowly from 10. You can nod or otherwise answer questions (for instance, there is enough time to grab the crown and the jade coffer lying near the couch, but nothing else before you reach 1), but your audible countdown may stampede characters unfamiliar with this scenario up the stairs. Those who retreat continue to feel the effects of a cave-in, with dust blowing up the stairs behind them, and then bits of stone beginning to fall in the east-west tunnel, then the north-south tunnel, and so on as they retreat, with the sounds of loud collapses at the players’ heels . . . If the party bugs out, ask them if they thought the adventure was too hard.

PCs who actively disbelieve or who attempt to interact with the illusion can attempt a DC 20 Will save to note its illusory effect. Those who stay past the count of 10 or revert to *true seeing* pierce the illusion: Nothing has changed at all.

Treasure: The couch on which the false Acererak reclines is covered in thin gold leaf and worth 200 gp, the gem-studded crown is worth 800 gp, and the magic

MACE OF LICH SMITING

Treat this weapon as a +1 *mace*, except when wielded in the presence of a false Acererak. If wielded in the presence of a false Acererak, it glows with a bright golden light. When making attacks against the false Acererak, treat the mace as if it is a +5 *holy mace of*

disruption. The false Acererak reacts as if scared of the mace and makes all attacks against the wielder at –2 on attack rolls and –2 on DCs of spells cast. The mace does not gain this power-up against any other foe.

items it carried retain full market value if looted. The jade coffer itself is worth 200 gp, and contains six *potions of cure serious wounds*, ten 100-gp gems, a scroll containing seven randomly selected 2nd-level spells, and a map purporting to show the location of a ruin containing rich treasure several hundred miles away (it's fake).

19. Laboratory and Mummy Preparation Room (EL 3)

This chamber may have once served as Acererak's laboratory, though looks can be deceiving.

Shelves line the walls, and each shelf is stuffed with jars, vials, and glass bottles filled with colorful liquids. A large desk stands between two workbenches. A lone mummified hand, herbs, bones, and skulls are scattered about on the workbenches. Clay pots, urns, and rolls of linen are strewn around the floor. Along the south wall stand three large vats, each nearly 4 feet deep and at least 7 feet in diameter.

PCs who check out the jars on the shelves eventually discover they are filled with all sorts of dust and impotent ingredients. The urns and pots apparently once contained unguents, oils, and perfumes, by the smell and stains that remain.

Save for the vats, the only item of real interest is the mummified hand on one of the benches—in fact, this is a *mummified hand* as described on page 80 of *Libris Mortis*.

The Vats: All three vats still contain, apparently, murky water. Only probing into the water reveals, what, if anything, the water hides.

The westernmost vat actually does hold dirty water, and nothing else.

The middle vat contains a weak acid that causes a burning itch to affected flesh and deals 1d4+1 points of damage the round after contact. One half of a golden key is at the bottom of this vat.

The easternmost vat contains the other half of the golden key from the middle vat—but it also holds a murky gelatinous cube! Any character that sticks his hand into the water is considered grappled by the cube and is immediately pulled into the vat. Roll initiative.

Gelatinous Cube (Vat-Shaped): hp 54; *Monster Manual* page 201.

The two key halves are magical (transmutation; 20th). If joined, they fuse and form a single key, hereafter referred to as the First Key.

20. Pit of Two Hundred Spikes (EL 7)

A 30-foot-long, 10-foot-deep gap in the corridor is studded with spikes. Observation reveals the spikes are far enough apart for Medium characters to walk between them.

Trap: Any pressure whatsoever along the easternmost 10-foot section of pit bottom triggers the projected spike trap, potentially over and over again with each step.

Projected Spike Trap: CR 7; magic device; location trigger; automatic reset (1 round); DC 25 Reflex save avoids; 10-ft. deep (1d6, fall); pit spikes (Atk +15 melee, 1d8 spikes per target for 1d8 each); multiple targets (targets in pit and in 5 foot section of corridor adjacent to pit); Search DC 26; Disable 20.

21. Agitated Chamber (EL 10)

Characters see some sort of abandoned funeral chamber; show **graphic #21**:

Rotted sofas, several thronelike chairs, small tables, braziers, vases, and dented, chipped, even broken urns lie in disarray about the chamber, as if purposely tumbled and looted. Only the tapestries, featuring weed-grown rocks and greenish scenes of undersea life, seem to have escaped such rough treatment.

Traps: The entire room is built upon a magical perturbation trap, which has 50% chance to trigger each round any character or characters remain in the chamber. More lethal by far are the slime tapestry traps that must be moved aside to search the walls behind them (necessary to find the secret door in the western wall with a DC 24 Search check, though any time a tapestry is handled, a chance exists that the perturbation trap triggers and causes the tapestry to tear...). The slime tapestry trap and the perturbation trap can work in conjunction to disastrous effect.

A general inventory of the chamber turns up six locked trunks and twenty-four locked coffers (Open Lock DC 20 +2d6).

Coffers 2, 6, 11, and 14 contain two small vipers.

Coffers 4, 19, and 24 contain three small vipers.

Coffers 1, 9, and 22 contain four small vipers.

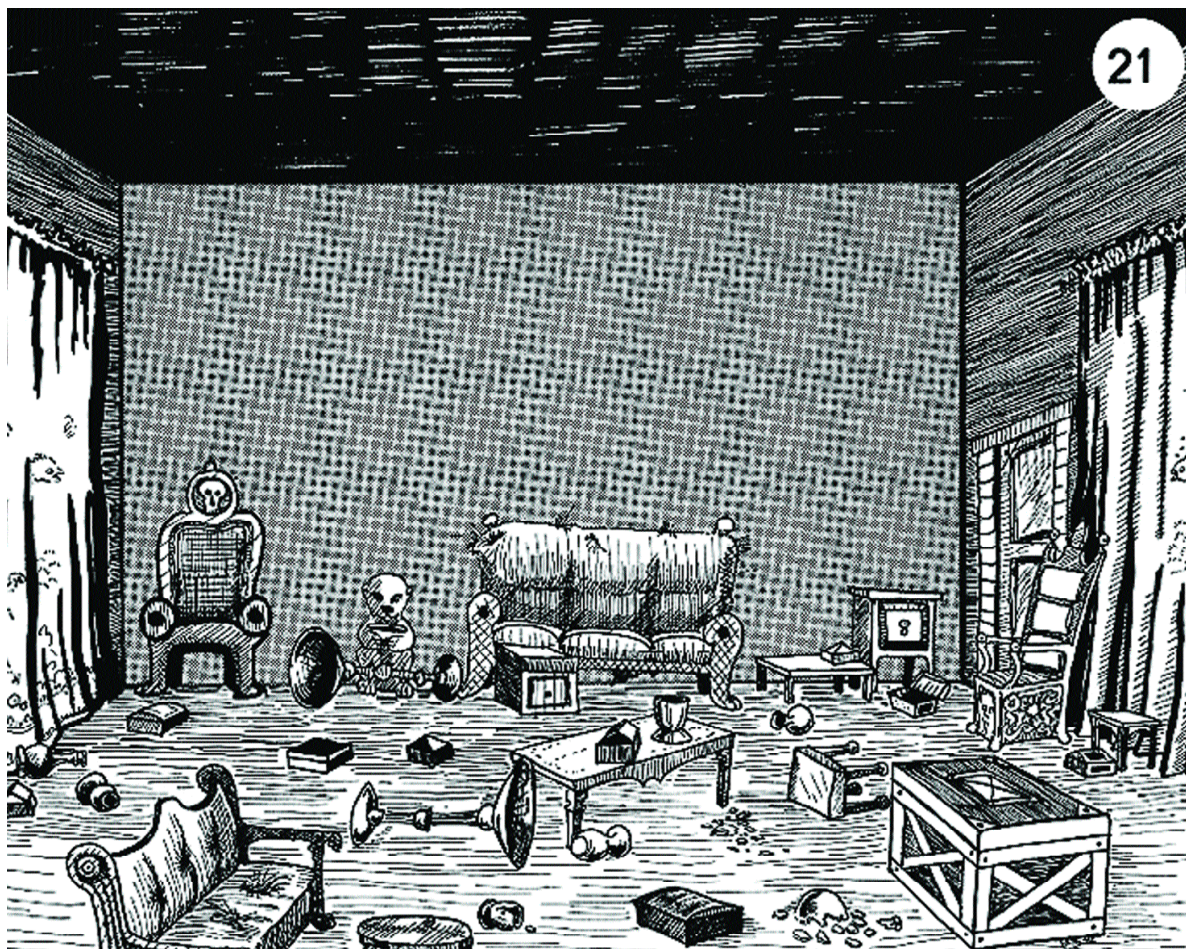
Small Vipers (9): hp 4; *Monster Manual* page 280.

Coffers 3, 8, 10, 12, 13, 15, 18, 20, 21, and 23 each contain 10d10 gp.

Coffers 5, 7, 16, and 17 contain 2d4 sapphires (50 gp value each).

Perturbation Trap: CR 3; mechanical; location trigger (50% chance each round—roll for chance at end of each round); automatic reset (1 round reset); mechanical effect (room shakes, characters fall prone, 1 point of damage, DC 14 Reflex save to avoid); Search DC 28; Disable Device DC 28.

Slime Tapestry Traps: CR 9; magic device; action trigger (if a tapestry is purposely torn, torn down, or if a tapestry is held back to search behind it for secret



doors when the perturbation trap goes off, the slime tapestry trap triggers); manual (magical) reset; magical effect (tapestry reverts to green slime and covers 10-foot-deep by 20-foot-long section immediately in front of where the tapestry hung, death by being engulfed in green slime, DC 24 Reflex save to avoid); Search DC 28; Disable Device DC n/a.

Hallway Traps (EL 7)

Two pit traps lurk beneath the floor of the hallway beyond entry 21, as shown on the map.

Pit Traps (2): CR 5; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; DC 20 Reflex save avoids; 100 ft. deep (10d6, fall); Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 20.

A bleakborn lies quiescent at the bottom of the trap that lies at the intersection of the two corridors (the westernmost pit trap).

Bleakborn (1): hp 52; *Libris Mortis* page 86.

22. Cavern of Mists (EL 7)

Looking into this chamber from outside, characters see the following:

The corridor opens into a wide room filled with silvery mists shot through with gold streamers.

The mists, magically generated (conjunction; CL 20th) are poisonous, and any character who enters them who is not holding her breath must make a DC 17 Fortitude save or act as if *confused* (as per the spell) each round until she succeeds on a saving throw. Make a new saving throw each round—the *confusion* effect lasts 1 round beyond the round a character successfully saves. Thereafter, the character is immune to the effect. The *confusion* effect is secondary to the *draining melody* effect generated by the crypt chanter deeper in the cavern.

Monster: Acererak once caged a siren here in the grotto behind the mists, but she escaped years ago (and the demons responsible for returning the tomb to a “pristine” condition after each group of adventurers passed through couldn’t catch her again). Now a crypt chanter lairs here. By coincidence, the crypt chanter looks not unlike the siren once magically bound to this

chamber—when characters clear the mist, show them **graphic #22**. The crypt chanter spies the characters when they spy it, assuming they make no special effort to remain in hiding. Roll initiative.

Crypt Chanter (1): hp 45; *Libris Mortis* page 93.

23. False Hides the True

The door at the northern end of this corridor opens onto what is apparently a blank wall—a so-called “false door.” However, the blank stone wall hides a secret door (DC 25 Search check) which opens into the corridor beyond.

Immediately on the other side of the secret door is another secret door, but this one is a secret trap door in the floor (DC 26 Search check). It opens onto a steep flight of narrow stairs that spiral down to a 5-foot-wide crawlway that connects into the corridor leading to area 24.

23A. Trapping Corridor (EL 11)

Unlike many other standard doors previously encountered in the tomb, the doors opening onto this corridor are wide double doors, and oddly enough (if noticed; DC 25 Spot check) have recessed hinges that will allow the doors to swing in either direction.

Magically generated (conjunction; CL 20th) poisonous gas that induces sleep fills this corridor section. If



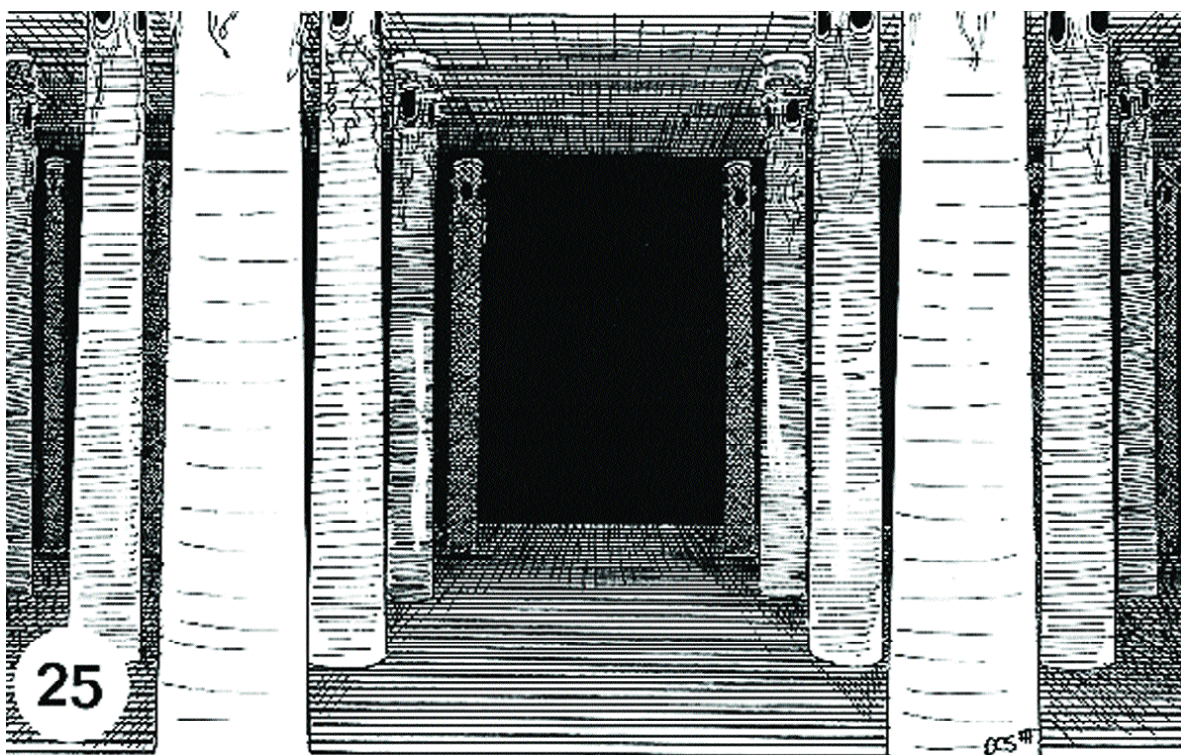
either door is opened (the western door, or the northern door on the eastern side of the corridor), the gas instantly expands to fill the corridor or corridors beyond to a distance of 30 feet. Characters caught in the gas must make a DC 20 Fortitude saving throw or fall into enchanted slumber from which no amount of shaking, slapping, or damage avails to wake them—only the dispersal of the gas, or removing them from the area affected by the gas, returns an affected character to wakefulness. The gas disperses after 10 rounds, and no new gas is generated until both doors opening onto this corridor remain closed for at least an additional 10 rounds.

The pressure differential of the gas escaping this chamber is noted by the stone juggernaut in the chamber beyond this corridor, which emerges from its chamber and moves out to attack creatures lingering in the halls, whether sleeping or awake; see **Creature**.

Creature: A stone juggernaut docked in the chamber beyond 23A activates whenever the door opens, or when either door opening onto area 23A is opened. All double doors automatically open for the juggernaut.

The stone juggernaut (show **graphic #23**) is a stone golem with a special trample attack instead of a





stone golem's standard slam attacks. The golem moves at the speed indicated for a stone golem (20 feet [4 squares], or 2 squares on the *Tomb of Horrors* map if keyed to 10 feet per square), and rolls back and forth up and down the corridors it can reach. (It can't get beyond the secret door keyed to 23, or down into the crawlway that leads to area 24.) It attacks until destroyed (rolling back and forth as necessary) or until it smashes all creatures in its range into pulp.

Stone Juggernaut, Stone Golem (1): hp 107; juggernaut trample attack instead of slam attacks (juggernaut gets +5 on all trample-related checks, has Improved Trample, on successful trample attack [trample succeeds if not blocked; see page 157 of *Players Handbook*], juggernaut automatically deals 2d10+18 points of damage in the restricted narrows of the corridor); see page 136 *Monster Manual* for other stats.

24. Reinforced Door

At the end of the corridor, characters see the following:

A door forged of gleaming metallic alloy with massive reinforced hinges bars passage beyond this point. Three vertical slots mar the door's surface at waist height. Each slot is about 1 inch wide and 3 inches long.

The 1-foot-thick steel door (it's too expensive for the demons to keep replacing adamantine doors) is suffused

with a *globe of invulnerability* effect. (However, only the door, its hinges, and the stone around the hinges are so affected, allowing it to shed any spell of 4th or lesser level.) The effect cannot be brought down by a targeted *dispel magic*, but it can be suppressed for 1d4 rounds if the dispel check beats a DC of 22. If the door is removed from the stone that moors it through some determined engineering, it loses all magical abilities.

The door is locked (DC 45 Open Lock check), but opens of its own accord if three sword blades are simultaneously shoved into the slots.

Note: Once open, the door automatically swings closed 5 rounds later. In addition to the *invulnerability* effect, the door enjoys a magical hardness (which can be suppressed for 1d4 rounds as the *invulnerability* effect) that allows it to mash any metal less deformable than adamantine that someone may put in place to hold it open. A character trying to hold it open needs to make a DC 30 Strength check each round to hold it open. From inside (room 25), no slots or other obvious methods can get the door open again.

25. Pillared Throne Room (EL Variable)

The characters see a massive room filled with pillars; show **graphic #25**:

Scores of massive columns hold up a ceiling tiled in dark stone. Across a gulf of darkness, something glitters with orange light.

This large chamber contains many features, which are described below. The ceiling here is 30 feet high. The orange light is the gem at area C.

Pillars: These pastel-colored, 3-foot-diameter pillars are each home to a magical charge (transmutation; CL 12th) that is released if touched. Anyone touching a pillar (purposely or accidentally) must make a DC 22 Will saving throw or float upwards as if affected by a *levitate* spell, but not under his or her own control. Unfortunately, there is nothing on the ceiling with which one can get a good grip. Worse, a noticeable draft (in the upper air) sweeps all characters so affected toward the area keyed to the devil faces at areas A or B at a rate of 30 feet per round. The effect is broken if a character receives a *remove curse* or a *dispel magic* against a dispel check DC of 23. Otherwise an affected character soon finds out where the breeze leads . . . Those initially closer to A are drawn there, those closer to B are drawn there.

A. Devil Face: As a character approaches, show the player what seems to be sucking in air here: **graphic #6**. This devil face is set near the ceiling (25 feet above the floor). Any creature that comes within 5 feet of the face is sucked in (automatically if suffering from the levitation curse of the pillars, or on a failed DC 20 Reflex save or Strength check if otherwise). Luckily, the effect is not annihilation; instead all sentient characters are teleported and “spat out” of the face at area 6, while all their belongings are teleported to area 33.

B. Devil Face: As a character approaches, show the player what seems to be sucking in air here: **graphic**

#6. However, this face has a bluish cast. This devil face is set near the ceiling (25 feet above the floor). Any creature that comes within 5 feet of the face is sucked in (automatically if suffering from the levitation curse of the pillars, or on a failed DC 20 Reflex save or Strength check if otherwise). Affected creatures and objects are teleported to area 27A.

C. Charred Remains: When characters look here, show **graphic #25C** and read the following text.

Cinders, ashes, charred bones and skulls, and the crisped and blackened remains of gear, clothing, arms, and armor are strewn about a huge, glowing orange gem.

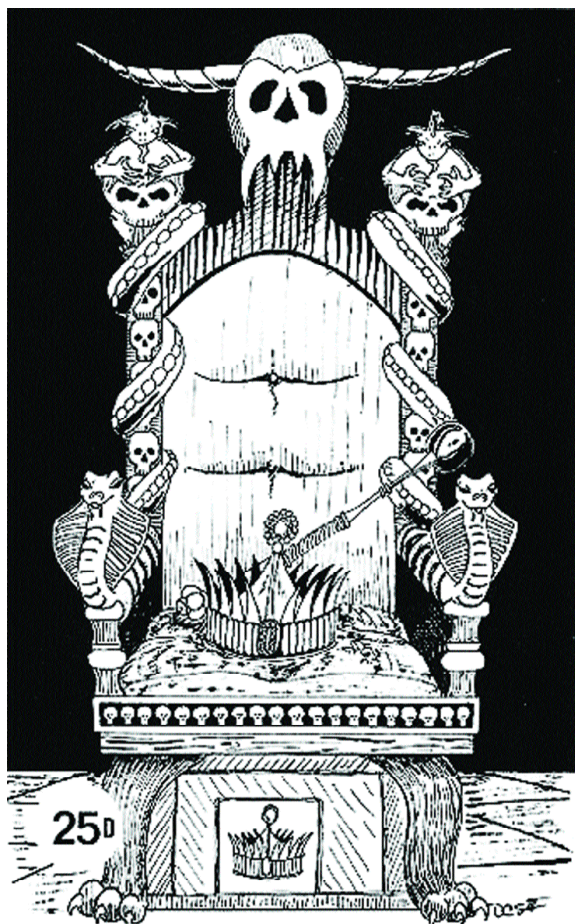
The gem detects as evil (overwhelming) and magical (universal; CL 20th); it is a *gem of cursed wishing* (see page 27).

D. Ebony Dais and Silver Throne: See **graphic #25D**.

A stark black dais holds an obsidian throne inlaid with silver and ivory skulls. A crown and scepter rest upon the throne. The crown is golden, while the scepter has a silver end, and one of gold.

Both the crown (see page 28) and the scepter (see page 30) are magic items keyed to this chamber.





A search of the throne reveals a few things, including a small replica of the crown inlaid in silver upon the lower front panel of the seat (DC 15), and a secret door below the throne (DC 32 Search check), though it can

be opened only by some sort of magic key. (In fact, touching the silver end of the scepter to the inlay induces the throne to sink, revealing a 5-foot-wide passageway to the south, toward area 28.)

26. Electric Blue (EL 10)

Both the small rooms keyed to this entry share the same exterior:

This small door seems to shimmer with a faint blue light. A sturdy brass ring hangs enticingly at the center of the door.

Both doors keyed to this entry are unlocked. The western room keyed to this entry is empty of all but dust. The eastern room keyed to this entry is not empty:

A large wooden sarcophagus rests upon a low stone table. Broken and looted chests, urns, and coffers are scattered about on the floor.

The sarcophagus contains the parts of a mummy (not an undead creature, exactly, for at this time it is the mummified remains of a human) with wrappings partially undone and tattered, and a huge amethyst just barely visible between the wrappings covering the head—the gem is lodged in one eye-socket.

Creature: If the mummified corpse is robbed of its gem (or its magic ring; see below), the cursed gem activates (and disintegrates), pulling the spirit of a mummy lord into the corpse, which attacks the characters to the best of its abilities. Note the *ring of fire resistance* it wears, hidden beneath the wrappings on the middle finger of its left hand.

GEM OF CURSED WISHING

The gem of cursed wishing grants a *wish*, but it perverts the *wish* made so that no matter the *wish*, the desire of the holder is perverted, reversed, or otherwise foully twisted such that the holder (and any other hoping to benefit by the *wish*) is instead hurt. For instance, wishing a friend back alive might kill another friend, or disperse the remains; the DM makes the final call.

Description: This shining orange gem is the size of a fist. Once the *wish* is made, the gem pulses a searing, hellish red.

Activation: Anyone who touches the gem is telepathically infused with the certain knowledge that the gem can grant one *wish* to its holder. A holder activates it by making a verbal *wish*.

Effect: Once the *wish* is made, it turns red as mentioned above; ask for initiative, and roll for the gem, too. Characters can take any action they desire if they act before the gem, but on the gem's turn, it explodes in a searing ball of hellfire in a 15-foot radius that deals 200 points of fire damage to all creatures; it deals 70 points to those who succeed on a DC 23 Reflex save. The gem remains as a noisome mass of stinking purplish mold that bubbles and chuckles. In one week, the mass reforms as a glowing orange gem capable of granting one more *wish*.

Aura/Caster Level: Overwhelming universal. CL 20th.

Weight: 1/2 lb.

GOLDEN CROWN

This gold crown contains several enhancements, though most of them are keyed to room 25 of the tomb.

Description: This gold crown is a small replica that is inlaid in silver.

Activation: Anyone who wears the crown learns of its powers.

Effect: If worn, the wearer is immediately telepathically visited with the information that the crown cannot be removed unless the scepter is touched to it—see specifics under the *gold and silver scepter* description. The wearer can also immediately see within the throne room as if in normal daylight.

Also, the wearer is immune to the levitation effect of the pillars.

However, the crown cannot leave the chamber. If teleported out, it immediately returns with its wearer (if still worn). The wearer cannot physically walk out of the chamber and must remove the crown to do so.

Aura/Caster Level: Overwhelming transmutation [evil]. CL 20th.

Construction: Requires Create Wondrous Item, *darkvision*, *bestow curse*, *teleport*, 1,250 gp, 100 XP, 3 days.

Weight: 1/2 lb.

Price: 2,500 gp.

Mummy Lord (10th-Level Cleric): hp 97; possessions *ring of fire resistance*; *Monster Manual* page 190.

Tactics: The mummy lord begins combat with a *slay living*, then *insect plague*.

27. Scintillating Violet (EL 12)

The room keyed to this entry has a snazzy exterior.

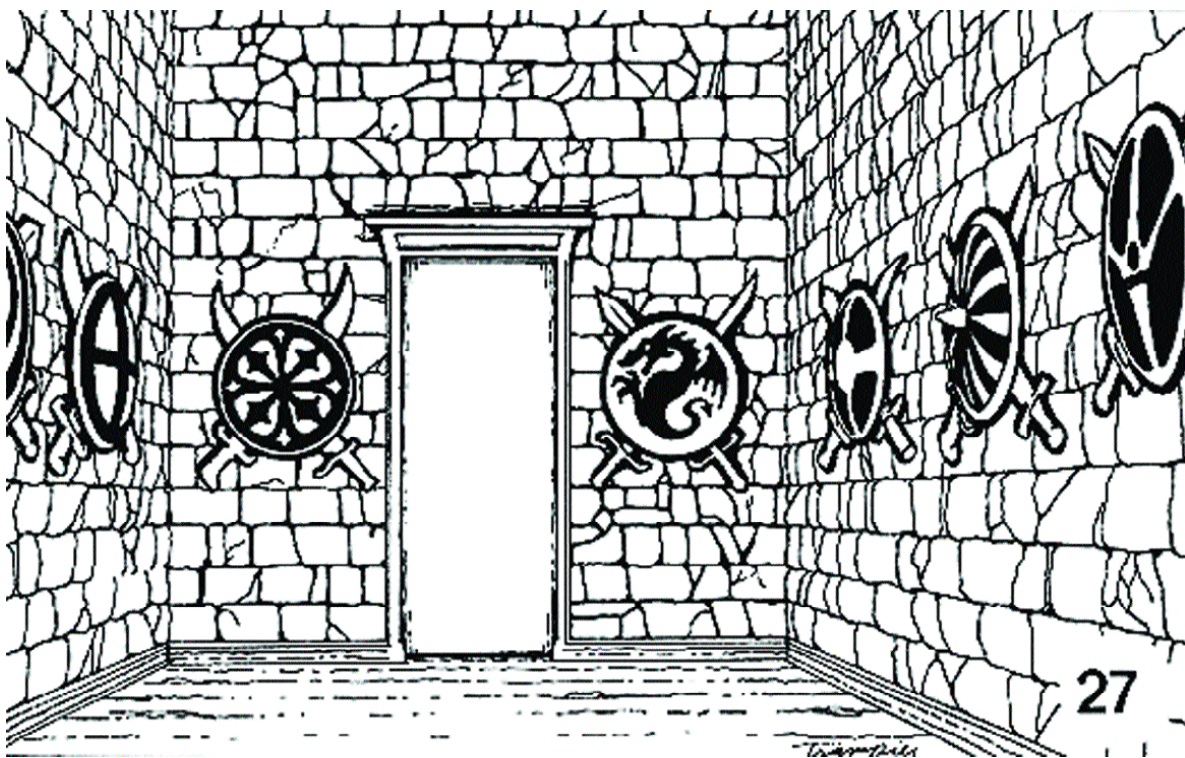
This small door seems to scintillate with a faint violet light. A sturdy brass ring hangs enticingly at the center of the door.

The door opens easily, but it brightens when so pulled, showing tinges of sickly green flickering amidst the violet.

Once the door is open, show **graphic #27**:

This 10-foot-square chamber contains many martial war decorations, which consist of crossed swords over round shields.

A total of eight sets of crossed swords hang on the walls of this room (three on each east and west wall, and two flanking the north and south doors).



Creature: The decorations are actually specially animated constructs, and they attack en masse any creature who crosses the threshold of the chamber (or who attacks into the chamber). If a character is hacked to pieces, surviving decorative sets return to their wall mounts, waiting for the next transgressor.

Crossed Swords and Shield Constructs (8): hp 52; see below.

Tactics: If a character makes it all the way to room 27A, the constructs cease attacking that character and return to the wall or move on to the next character that crossed the threshold.

CROSSED SWORDS AND SHIELD CONSTRUCT CR 4

N Small construct

Init +0; **Senses** blindsight 60 ft.

AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 16

hp 52 (4 HD); **DR** 5/—

Immune construct immunities

Fort +1, **Ref** +1, **Will** –4

Speed fly 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee 2 long swords +9 (1d8+6/19–20)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Base Atk +8; **Grp** n/a

Abilities Str 22, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 1

Special Qualities Construct traits

Feats —

Skills —

27A. The Chamber of Hopelessness

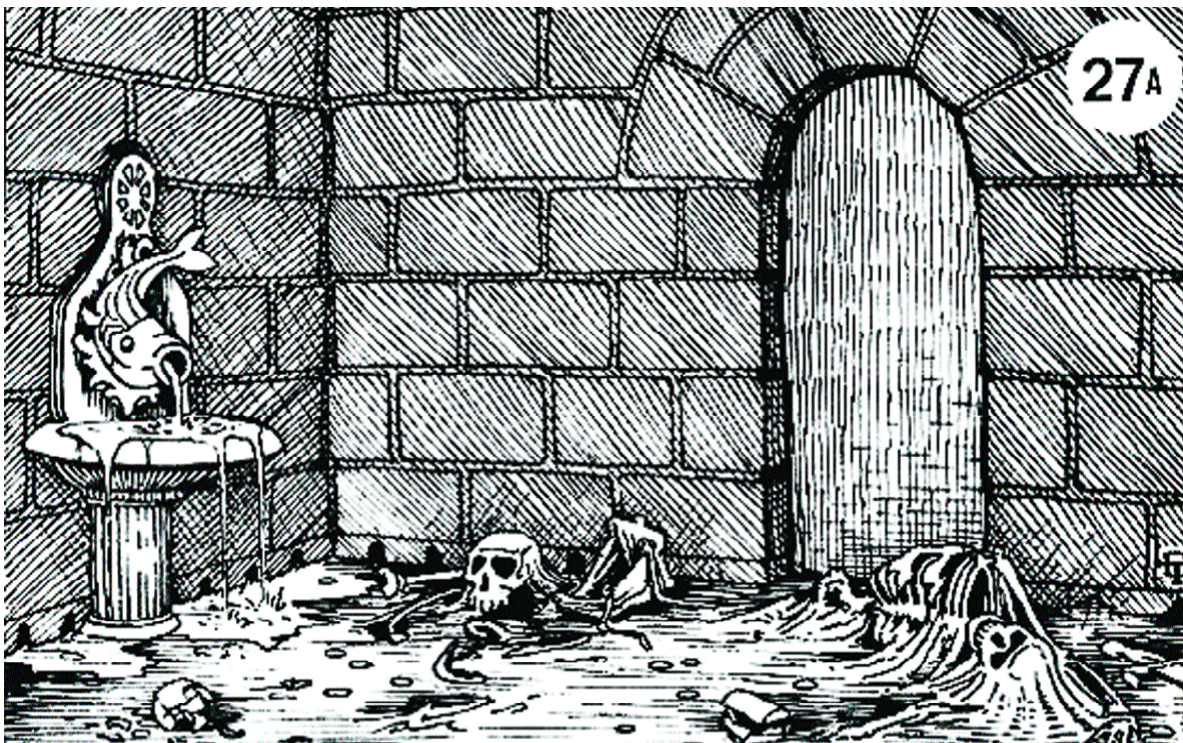
Characters who enter or arrive suddenly (as from the teleport trap from the devil face in room 25) in this chamber see **graphic #27A**:

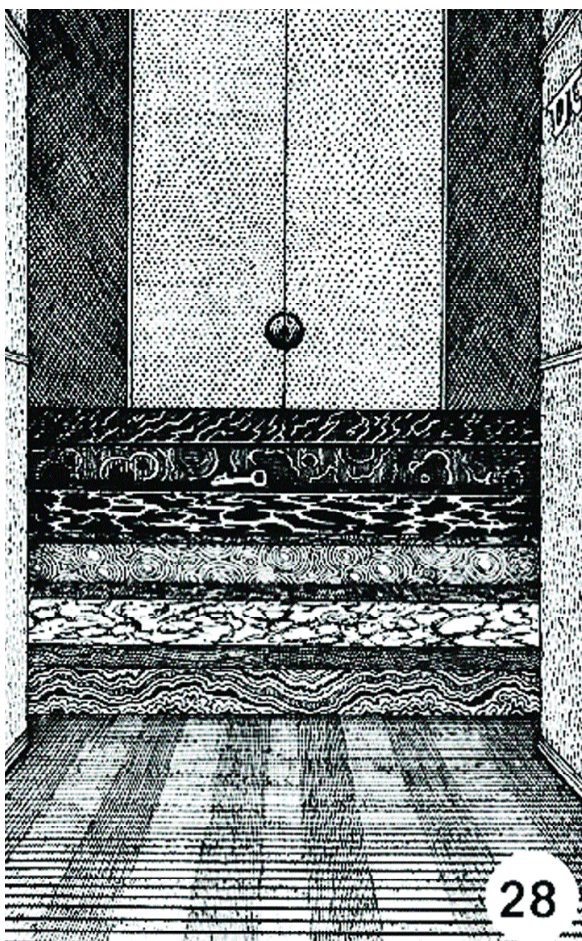
Water spills from a wall basin onto a sodden floor strewn with decayed bones and rotted equipment. Runes are carved in the northern wall.

Anyone studying the runes who can read Common sees the following:

“YOU WHO DARED TO VIOLATE MY TOMB MAY REMAIN
AND DIE SLOWLY OF STARVATION, OR ESCAPE TO CERTAIN DEATH.
WHATEVER YOUR CHOICE, ACERERAK THE ETERNAL
WATCHES AND SCOFFS AT YOUR PUNY EFFORTS
AND ENJOYS YOUR DEATH THROES.”

The water is safe to drink, but lacking in nutrition as the many skeletons lying here testify. Many fine cracks in the ground make certain that flooding the place by stopping up drainage is impossible. The door to room 27 opens easily, but the constructs there must be dealt with (if they haven't already been destroyed); however, the constructs cease their attack as soon as the character(s) retreats into the chamber to the north.





28. Wondrous Foyer

The narrow passage behind the throne leads to a landing and steps that funnel south. See **graphic #28**.

The steps, wall, and ceiling of this stairwell are each apparently forged of a separate precious or semiprecious metal. A bronze key lies untended on one of the steps.

The six steps are made of onyx, pink marble, lapis, black marble, serpentine (golden), and malachite (respectively, from lowest to highest). The walls are lined with copper (untarnished and gleaming) panels set between rare woods inlaid with ivory. The ceiling is silvered iron, formed so as to reflect and multiply light. Upon the fourth step is a large, cylindrical key of bronze called the *key of antipathy* (see page 31). The doors on the south wall are apparently made of mithral (see entry 29).

29. Mithral Valves (EL 9)

The doors set on the southern end of room 28 are 14-foot wide and 28-foot tall (and 3-feet thick). They are *not* forged of mithral; they just appear as if they are. (As in other places, it was too expensive for the demons to keep replacing mithral doors stolen by ambitious tomb looters.) However, in addition to a glamor to give the valves an illusion of mithral, they are suffused with a *globe of invulnerability* effect that affects only the doors, their hinges, and the stone and metal around the hinges, allowing the valves to shed any spell of 4th or lesser level). The effect cannot be brought down by a targeted *dispel magic* but it can be suppressed for 1d4 rounds if the dispel check beats a DC of 22. If one or both valves are removed from the stone that moors it through some determined engineering, the valve (or valves) loses all magical abilities. The doors also enjoy a traplike effect called the flood of blood).

Treasure: Amid the rotting equipment, a few valuables remain. A DC 18 Search check reveals 743 gp in a holed bag, several crushed gems, shattered vials, and broken (and 0 charge) wands, an unbroken *potion of reduce person* and a +1 flail with the name "Shatterskull" inscribed in Dwarven on the shaft.

GOLD AND SILVER SCEPTER

This gold and silver scepter contains a few enhancements keyed to room 25, or to the *golden crown*.

Description: One end of the scepter is a ball of gold, while the other is a sphere of silver.

Activation: If the silver end of the scepter is touched to the silver inlay of the crown on the throne, the secret door is revealed, as described. Additionally, touching the scepter to the crown has another effect that depends on which end is used to touch the crown.

Effect: If touching the scepter to the *golden crown* in order to remove it, the wearer must choose between the silver or golden end. If the silver end is

touched to the crown, the wearer must make a DC 23 Fortitude save or be instantly snuffed out, turning to a fetid powder that cannot be brought back to life through any means save 9th-level effects such as *wish* or *miracle*. On a successful save, nothing happens, but the crown does not come off. If the golden knob of the scepter is touched to the crown, the wearer can lift it from his or her head.

Aura/Caster Level: Overwhelming transmutation [evil]. CL 20th.

Construction: Requires Create Wondrous Item, *bestow curse*, 1,250 gp, 100 XP, 3 days.

Weight: 1/2 lb.

Price: 2,500 gp

The valves are locked (DC 45 Open Lock check; see **Trap** below), but offer a tempting keyhole: Where the valves meet, at about waist height, is a cuplike depression, a hemispherical concavity, with a central hole. The hole appears to be the keyhole for the *key of antipathy*, but if the *key of antipathy* is inserted, the character doing so is jolted for 2d10 points of electricity damage, while the first key (obtained from room 19) deals 4d10 points of damage to anyone who inserts it!

The real key to these great gates is the *gold and silver scepter* from 25D. If the gold ball is inserted into the depression, the valves swing silently open. If the silver sphere is touched to the hemispherical cup, the character must make a DC 23 Will save or instantly be spat out of the devil's mouth at 6, while all nonliving materials with him are teleported to area 33. The scepter flashes back to the throne at 25D.

Trap: If the valves are scratched or nicked, a line of blood appears; if attacked by force significant enough to deal any damage (or if an Open Lock check fails by more than 5), the flood of blood trap is triggered.

Flood of Blood Trap: CR 9; magic device; action trigger (if the valves take damage or absorb damage with hardness, or an Open Lock check fails by more than 5, the trap triggers); magical reset; magical effect (the throne/secret door at 25D reseals and locks [DC 45 Open Lock check to access again] and the valves gush forth the blood of all those who've died in the tomb and floods the room in 4 rounds; see drowning rules on page 304 of the DMG); Search DC n/a; Disable Device n/a.

Note: A *cure critical wounds* applied to the valve staunches the flow of blood, as will a *heal*, two *cure serious wounds*, or four *cure light wounds* spells. The blood drains out after 24 hours.

30. False Treasure Room (EL Variable)

When characters look into this chamber, show **graphic #30**:

KEY OF ANTIPATHY

This bronze key has an effect that repels creatures.

Description: This large, cylindrical key is formed from bronze.

The *key of antipathy* appears to work as a normal key, and visually it appears to fit the mithral valves described in entry 29 (though on a successful DC 30 Search check, a comparison reveals this not to be the case).

Activation: Touching the key activates its power.

Effect: This bronze key enjoys an *antipathy* effect—any creature touching it must make a DC 23

A silvered ceiling reflects a grand room with inlaid ivory and gold tiled walls and a polished agate tiled floor. A hulking black iron demonic sculpture rests in each corner of the chamber, each bearing a distinctive weapon. In addition, the chamber contains a gold filigreed bronze urn from which issues a thin stream of smoke, two iron chests, and a granite sarcophagus which is plainly inscribed with the name 'ACERERAK.'

Most of the features in this chamber are designed to distract and derail characters intent on finding the real treasury of Acererak.

Antimagic Chamber: The room itself is lined with lead and exists within a customized *antimagic field* (abjuration; CL 20th), so no spells work within the chamber, and no magical properties of items of any sort properly function *except* items and spells that detect auras such as magic or evil. Also, the spell-like abilities of the efreeti function normally, as do the enchantments on the contents of the iron chests.

A. Bronze Urn: This gold filigreed container is the size of a Small creature, and a thin stream of smoke issues from a tiny vent in its brass stopper that is sealed with gold fill. This gold must be pried out to open the urn. If the stopper is removed, an efreeti emerges. If the urn has been battered, knocked about, shaken, overturned, and so on, the efreeti is in a fury and attacks immediately. Otherwise, it is hostile and must be dealt with in a diplomatic fashion (see page 72 of the *Player's Handbook*—if not immediately hostile, the efreeti begins as unfriendly toward the PCs) to coax out a single *wish*; otherwise it merely leaves (walking from the chamber then *plane shifting* away).

Efreeti (1): hp 65; **Special Ability** able to use its spell-like abilities in this chamber; *Monster Manual* page 115.

Will save or be repelled by an overpowering urge to avoid the key. The compulsion forces them to abandon the key and never touch it again. Even on a successful save, a creature feels uncomfortable touching or using it.

Aura/Caster Level: Overwhelming enchantment. CL 20th.

Construction: Requires Create Wondrous Item, *antipathy*, 1,250 gp, 100 XP, 3 days.

Weight: n/a.

Price: 2,500 gp.



B. Granite Sarcophagus: The huge outer shell of this stone container is scribed with the name ACER-ERAK (a DC 20 Spot check reveals that some precious inlay was pried out at some point in the past). The sarcophagus opens with not too much effort (DC 16 Strength check) and contains the rotted remnants of an inner wooden coffinlike shell, a few bones, defaced jewelry (precious stones pried out), torn bits of robes and windings, dust, and a broken staff (a DC 15 Knowledge (arcana) check reveals that it was a *staff of the magi*). If this broken staff is removed from this chamber, the effect of breaking a *staff of the magi*, long delayed, is visited upon the holder; see page 280 of the DMG.

Among the remnants is a shattered skull. (Why, the demilich has long been destroyed, but his magical traps somehow survived!)

C. Iron Chests: Each of these massive iron boxes is set into the stone and is triple locked (Open Lock DCs 20, 25, and 35, respectively) and each is set with poison needle traps. Both show marks of prying, battering, and so on.

Poison Needle Traps (3) CR 6, 8, and 10, respectively; mechanical; touch trigger; manual reset; Atk +8 ranged (1 plus wyvern oil poison—*Dungeon Master's*

Guide page 296); Search DC 22, 26, and 30 respectively; Disable Device DC 20, 24, and 28 respectively.

The eastern chest holds 10,000 gems that appear to be of not less than base 50 gp value each, thanks to an illusory effect (illusion; CL 20th) that fades if the gems are removed from the tomb. Each is actually a quartz flint worth at most 1 cp.

D. Iron Statues: Each iron statue is 9 feet tall and is forged of black iron. The statue to the northeast stands with a saw-toothed two-handed sword raised to strike; the statue to the northwest has a huge, spike-ended mace; to the southeast the sculpture readies a wickedly spiked morning star, and the one in the southwest has a glaive. Each has a magical aura (transmutation; CL 20th), but they are merely hunks of metal; they do nothing. Each has an evil aura as well (overwhelming), and the visage of each of these iron statues is most fearsome and terrifying.

Those interested in moving the statues may do so with a DC 22 Strength check. If the northwestern statue is moved, a pull ring in the floor is revealed. The pull ring is a concealed door that opens into a 10-foot deep, 5-foot wide shaft that opens onto a lower corridor leading west, as shown on the map.

31. Phase Exit

The two one-way doors at the southern end of the two matched hallways (as shown on the map) are magical in-dungeon constructions (transmutation; CL 20th) that utilize an effect similar to *passwall* in that they allow characters approaching from the north to pass as if normal through either door into the east-west corridor to the south. Once through, however, the passage simply doesn't exist from the south. Once something partly enters the door from the north, it is committed—it cannot stop halfway and return. Thus, a rope or other long object must pass all the way through. Attempting to pull it back up toward the north is like attempting to pull the wall itself—it acts as if embedded.

32. The True Crypt? (EL 8)

Read this carefully; the room beyond the secret door changes aspects depending on the actions of the characters.

The Secret Door to the True Crypt

A secret door at this location noted on the map leads into the crypt. Discovery of the secret door (DC 25 Search check) reveals a small keyhole. If the first key (gold key from room 19) is inserted or characters

succeed on a DC 40 Open Lock check, a 10-foot-square section of the wall sinks; it is a stone-sheathed adamantine cube. (Can anyone doubt that the end of the adventure—one way or another—is near?)

The Crypt

Revealed by the sinking cube described above is a 10-foot wide, 20-foot deep cavity with an arched, 25-foot tall ceiling, apparently empty save for a small, square depression a few inches deep in the center of the floor. Careful inspection (DC 25 Search check) reveals a small hole in the depression—another keyhole!

If the first key (gold key from room 19) is inserted or a DC 45 Open Lock check is failed by 5 or more, the first key trap is triggered.

First Key Trap: CR 6; magic device; action trigger (if first key is used in lock or DC 45 Open Lock check is flubbed by 5 or more the trap is triggered); automatic reset; key explodes plus spell effect (*fireball*, 10th-level wizard, 10d6 fire, DC 14 Reflex save half damage); Search DC 32; Disable Device DC 37.

If the *key of antipathy* is inserted into the keyhole and turned, nothing untoward happens; in fact, nothing happens at all, unless the key is completely rotated clockwise three times in succession. If this occurs, the crypt trap is triggered.

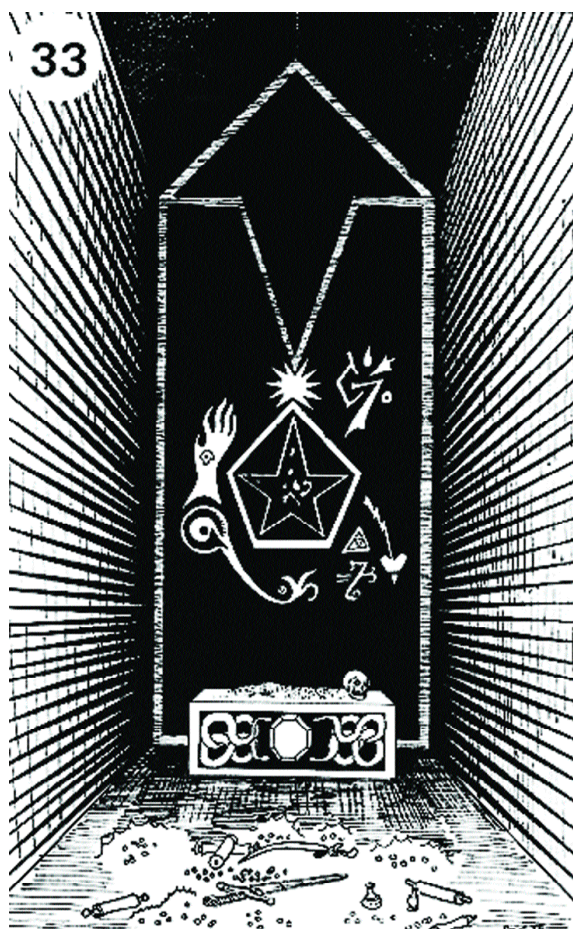
Crypt Trap: CR 6; magic device; action trigger (if *key of antipathy* is used in lock or DC 45 Open Lock check is *successful* the trap is triggered); automatic reset; true vault rises from floor (20d20, crush); multiple targets (vault fills entire southern 15-foot section of the 20-foot deep room); never miss; onset delay (1 round); Search DC 30; Disable Device DC n/a. *Note:* Those crushed are compacted up into the space above the true crypt—a DC 30 Disable Device check can reset the true crypt back into the floor so that trapped (and probably deceased) compatriots and their belongings can be accessed.

After the crypt trap is triggered, the southern 15-foot section of the chamber is filled with a mithral vault. A mithral door with a pull ring is visible, and it opens onto room 33 (inside the mithral vault) with a hard pull (DC 15 Strength check).

33. Crypt of Acererak the Demilich (EL 12)

When characters open the door at the end of the corridor revealed in 32, show **graphic #33**.

A pile of gems, coins, vials, scrolls, and other items lies immediately inside the door of this mithral vault, but against the rune-scribed far wall is a stone bier. On the bier is a thick layer of dust mixed with bone shards and a gem-encrusted skull.



Here lingers the demilich Acererak . . . or so it would seem. Most adventurers who reach this “true” crypt die screaming, thinking their souls are being plucked forth by Acererak himself. In truth, the skull described in the mithral vault, while potent and likely ultimately lethal to the PCs, is a construct created by the real demilich, designed to facilitate his elaborate, ages-long plot. The real demilich resides in his Fortress of Conclusion in the Negative Energy Plane, seeking to merge his consciousness with the fabric of negative energy itself, and so undergo a terrible apotheosis . . . but that is a story for another adventure (as recounted in *Return to the Tomb of Horrors*).

Creature: Acererak left behind the dust of his bones and a potent demilich-like construct resting in the far recesses of the vault. If the treasure in the crypt is touched, the dust swirls into the air and forms a manlike shape. In previous decades, the form, while seeming to threaten, couldn’t hurt intruders unless they interacted with it. But no more—now the form is a fully empowered ghost that immediately attacks characters who try to take the treasure.

Worse is the demilich construct, in the form of the jeweled skull (show **graphic #33A** if PCs study the

skull or if it attacks). In prior decades, the skull was content to wait until touched; however, if any creature touches the treasure or the skull itself, it attacks with its soul suck power immediately, until it vanquishes all foes.

Ghost (5th-Level Human Fighter): hp 32; *Monster Manual* page 117.

Demilich Construct: hp 49; see below.

DEMILICH CONSTRUCT

CR 12

NE Tiny construct

Init +0; **Senses** blindsight 60 ft.

AC 26, touch 12, flat-footed 26

hp 49 (9 HD); **DR** 20/keen or vorpal weapon

Immune magic (as golem; see below), construct immunities

Fort +3, **Ref** +3, **Will** +3

Speed fly 20 ft. (4 squares)

Space 2-1/2 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

Base Atk n/a; **Grp** n/a

Special Action soul suck*

Abilities Str 10, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1

Special Qualities construct traits

Feats —

Skills —

Immunity to Magic (Ex): The demilich construct is immune to all spells, spell-like abilities, and supernatural effects, just as if the attacker had failed to overcome spell resistance, except as follows.

A *command* spell “forget” causes the skull to sink down without sucking a soul.

Each *shatter* spell thrown at it deals 10 points of damage if it fails its saving throw.

A *power word kill* deals 10 points of damage if it fails its saving throw.

An *eyebite* spell deals 10 points of damage on a failed saving throw.

A *dispel evil* spell deals 5 points of damage.

A *holy word* pronounced against it deals 20 points of damage on a failed saving throw.

Soul Suck (Su): In lieu of regular attacks, the demilich construct makes a soul suck attack each round. The skull rises into the air 5 feet and attacks one of the characters by attempting to draw the soul of the target from his or her body and trapping it within one of the jewels set in the skull. (The skull preferentially targets those who deal it the most damage.) To resist the soul suck attack, a character must succeed on a DC 23 Fortitude saving throw. If foiled, the construct attacks again the next round. If successful, the soul is sucked into a





gem that gleams wickedly, while the soul-sucked body of the character collapses in a mass of corruption and molders in a single round—totally gone.

The skull can suck a total of eight souls—in any 24 hour period. *If foes remain once the skull is sated, it begins uttering *blasphemy* (page 205 *Player's Handbook*), one per round, with a caster variable caster level each round equal to 6+3d6.

Development: Ages past, a tiefling of surpassing evil and skill in both arcane and divine magic took the steps necessary to preserve his life force beyond the centuries he had already lived, and this creature became the lich Acererak. Over the scores of years that followed, the lich dwelled with hordes of ghastly servants in the gloomy stone halls of the very hill that houses the current tomb. Eventually Acererak hit upon a more insidious plan for extending his existence and power, so for the next eight decades, the lich's servants labored to create the Tomb of Horrors. Then Acererak apparently destroyed all of his slaves and servitors, magically hid the entrance to his halls, and went to his final haunt, while his soul roamed strange planes unknown to even the wisest of sages (though it later become clear that the ultimate focus of his consciousness moved to the Negative Energy Plane).

If the demilich construct skull is destroyed, each character trapped in a gem must make a DC 18 Will saving throw. A failed save indicates the demilich construct drained the soul and devoured it before being destroyed. Those who succeed are not destroyed, but their soul remains trapped in a gem; this is evidenced by a faint inner light (and the character is visible as a tiny figure within the gem if viewed with *true seeing* or similar effects). Treat the gem as the result of a successfully cast *soul bind* spell (page 281 *Player's Handbook*).

Treasure: The pile of coins and items include the following items.

- All the items from characters who lost their equipment through various tomb traps.
- Ninety-seven 10 gp gems and three huge gems (a 1,000 gp peridot, a 5,000 gp emerald, and a 10,000 gp black opal).
- Gems set in the demilich construct: two jewels set into the eye sockets (5,000 gp rubies) and 6 pointed (marquis cut) diamonds set as teeth in the jaw (each diamond worth 500 gp).
- Three *potions of cure serious wounds*, one *potion of heroism*, two *oils of keen edge*, two *potions of fly* and a *potion of greater magic fang*.

- Two scrolls of *command*, one scroll of *slow*, one scroll of *arcane eye*, one scroll of *shatter*, one scroll of *scorching ray*, one scroll of *dispel evil*, one scroll of *Melf's acid arrow*, and one scroll of *power word kill*.
- A ring of *feather falling*, a lesser rod of *silent metamagic*, and a *staff of fire*.
- A +3 *defending greatsword*, a *cursed backbiter spear*, and two -2 *cursed longswords*.
- A pair of *goggles of lifesight* (see *Libris Mortis*, page 78).
- A *wrapped tower* (see *Libris Mortis*, page 76).

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

Whether characters succeed, fail, or flee the tomb, the demons charged with its upkeep pick up the pieces afterward, slowly but surely returning the dead tomb to the status decreed by Acererak, whose true aims are too terrible to comprehend.

This ends the expedition to the Tomb of Horrors. We hope you and your players found it exciting, challenging, and rewarding.

